MOUNTAIN WALKS OF A RECLUSE

BY

REV. E. C. BURR

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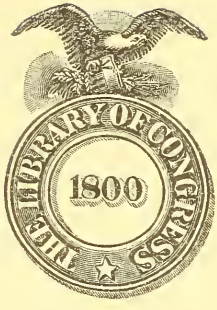

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THE RECLUSE.

Mountain Walks of a Recluse

By REV. E. C. BURR

Illustrated from Originals by JOHN DeCAMP

Foreword by MAY S. GILPATRIC

NEW YORK

Broadway Publishing Company

1903

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1903

Nov. 17, 1903
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BY

REV. E. C. BURR.

TO MY MOTHER.

Marie L. Burr.

West Haverstraw, September 17, 1903.

Come up Hither, and I will show thee things which must be Hereafter.—*Revelation iv.*, 1.

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FOREWORD.

Who, among those who dwell in cities for pleasure or profit, does not at some season of the year, feel that indescribable longing, magnetic, irresistible, for the country!

'Tis Nature calling us: "Come, and see, and partake of my riches!" Tangible and intangible she holds them forth with prodigal hands. Here are the birds, the fruits, the flowers, the radiant sunshine for one; the wind, the frost, the snow, the majestic gloom for another,—something for everyone who seeks with "the seeing eye."

But those, alas! are so few. We are so wantonly blind to all these wondrous master-works! We crowd with delighted eagerness, to view a bit of painted canvas or woven tapestry, yet carelessly trample on a gorgeous Autumn leaf and barely note the matchless tints of the sunset sky.

Still, one among us may stoop, and with tender hand brush away the dead leaves of Winter from the tiny green thing—the first-born of Spring—and read God's promises in every day's life and death. The brain is the note book, the

heart the pen, and the love of the Creator, the inspiration which gives to us such a book as this—a book, alive, breathing, speaking to us of the Life that is in us, and around us, everywhere, if we will but look and see. Perhaps we may be able to do this but superficially, as beginners in the great study of God's universe, so to us the "Recluse" gives the Nature-pictures he has so lovingly portrayed, and makes us his companions in his "Mountain Walks."

What an atmosphere of leisured and literary meditation pervades every page of the book—much of the dignified, scholarly ease of the Lake Poets who sang when the world was sweeter and kinder; an atmosphere which we drink in with the consciousness that this life of domestic simplicity, of innocent pleasures, of high and reverential thinking, lived close to Nature's heart, is the *true* life—and that all else is wrong, and inadequate, and mean.

The end comes, and we lay the book aside. The city's ceaseless roar drifts into the distance; the smoke haze fades away, and we stand in the sunlight's golden tracery under the walnut trees; the scent of summer is in the air, we hear the jubilant bird-songs and our souls are uplifted to the hills "whence cometh peace."

May S. Gilpatric.

Mountain Walks of a Recluse.

I.

August 15, 1899.

'Tis August now, and Nature's tired and worn.
The joy, the freshness, the full life of June,
The bobolink's exhaustless floods of tune
No longer fill the fields at break of morn.
Few birds are heard save in the rustling corn,
Where quails, not seen, in flute-like notes commune.
The aftermath, dew-jewelled o'er, is strewn
With flowers that died ere harvest heat was born.
The buds, the blades, the fragrant blossoms yield
To full and golden ears on every field.
The grain; the sickle; work complete; repose.
Our weary Mother Earth shall soon have rest,
Soon fall asleep on Indian Summer's breast,
As softly as the petals of the rose.

I sat 'neath the Monastery yesterday, Wallie, and wrote the enclosed sonnet while listening to the hot songs of the locusts. I send it with the

hope that it may be a vital breath to you in the dust of your work. Full August reigns. The time for which we have longed since last February is come. The year is in its full majesty of strength now, its fullest revelation of splendours, its supreme mystery of contemplation. I look upon the sky, and the far-off hills, and the fields all bright with new grass, and the words of S. Bernard's old hymn come to me—"What radiancy of glory!" It is the one month of all the year that veils the hills and the forests with a languor of purple haze; it gives an anæsthetic for the world's pain, and in its beatific calm we feel the very presence of God. And there is not that death-dealing rage in the heat of the sun that makes July so terrible. The clouds have none of the wild ravings of March; the wind has softened all its Niagara crash of music unto the melodies of a flute; the birds are as dignified as a House of Bishops, while in June they were as full of mischief as choir boys. The Spring lifted its bluet-gemmed baby clothes and splashed its feet in the rollicking waters of the brook; but to-day both the brook and the Summer have acquired the decorum of middle age. The frail blossoms of Easter-tide bent 'neath the weight of an honey bee: but now the Cardinal-flower and the Eupatorium and the Purple Loosestrife are a very riot of colour. It makes one strong just to see the vigour of the flowers that make the swamps so gorgeous. I am at Monksrest, in the midst of the Woodsia Ferns, and the blue jays scream all round. Young Harry Phillips is with me, and is arranging a bunch of Cardinal-flower that is in

the first beauty of its youth, like himself. We are going now to Caltha Swamp, where the lad hopes to find a yellow orchid for you. The old gardener here has given us a half dozen stalks of tuberoses, and our nerves are drenched with their intense sweetness.

II.

August 16, 1899.

Harry found the yellow orchid for you, Wallie, and brought it to me this morning in the hush and fragrance. I am writing this on the hills; sitting among the ripening brakes, just above the wall of rock, so black with Umbilicaria lichens. After a talk with the old hemlocks, I am going to our dear Caltha Swamp. The August light as it broods over Tor Lake is as drowsy as the odour of poppies. It is 10 A. M. I am in the swamp, sitting on the fence, so old and grey with moss, and the long ribbons of sunshine drift and float round the towering oaks that breathe a benediction of peace. Harold Anderson's mother has just passed, on her way to the valley with a basket of huckleberries, so large and sweet, a veil of soft purple on every berry like the dreamy radiance of the haze all round me. I like her face, so old in patience, and like the passionless calm of the rocks among which she has lived so long. She was at Mass at the Monastery, the Festival of the Transfiguration, the 6th of the month, and gave me a copy of a new Collect used at the service. It is this:

O God, Who didst lead Thy Son, Jesus Christ, up into the Mount with chosen witnesses, before whom He was transfigured—with countenance like lightning and raiment white as snow; grant that we, with Him, may toil up through the heights of suffering, and in the midnight of the soul's release be transfigured with His Eternal Health and Godhead; through Him, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

I thought you might like to know it. I hear the snap of twigs, and Mrs. Anderson is coming back, glad with the joy of knowing that her sick friend appreciated the berries. She gave me some money and wished me to get Thoreau's "Walden" for Harold. To-morrow will be his birthday.

III.

August 16, 1899.

Right after lunch I ran into the city, Wallie, and got "Walden" for Mrs. Anderson, and have just taken it to her. Harold was home, and she gave it to him before me, and he was just radiant with delight, and so was she. I know the book will exalt them both. I went into their old garden a moment, beneath the steep grey rocks; and memory brought back the daffodils that softened the harsh air as I stood there last April. Now I am resting in our old haunts in Caltha Swamp, and the hush saturates me. The shadows have deepened since I passed through an

hour ago, and I wait, thinking that a whippoorwill may be lured into song. And I shall not be disappointed; over and over again a dear monk in his cloister chants his primeval vespers; and on all sides his fellows take it up, and answer with plaintive counterpart of song. The sun has just gone down into the red sea of fire in pursuit of the sped minutes and hours and centuries. Alas, they can never be brought back! But who would give the surety of Canaan for the past slavery of Egypt! I pause at Cardinal Brook, where a stalk of its own glorious flower cries to me with siren voice: but I must wait—it is too late to trust the swamp now. The Clethras pour out their souls' prayers on the dew-drenched night, and a last locust sings ere hanging his harp among the flowers until morning. He left a sharp trail of resinous song, and now all is still. It is a silence too holy to break even by the worship of the whippoorwills, and I think of that verse in The Revelation—"There was silence in Heaven half an hour." As I go on my way, a crow flies from out the hemlocks at Brow-wait, and I am sorry to have disturbed my friend. He probably had been reading Thoreau, who praises God for crows that keep out of gun-shot. He could have staid, though, with safety: I would as soon lift a weapon against a blossom. Just here a hot hissing meteor lights up the night and trails its splendours through the sky—a lightning messenger from a dead star. I stop at the spring, and drink from its star-lit waters, and the hills breathe Good Night.

IV.

August 17, 1899.

Good morning, Wallie! I went to the Monastery of the Walnut Trees to-day, and the dear old Father Abbot, who received us so graciously, let me in, and I sat with him an hour in that fine east window, listening while he read a chapter from an old botanist on orchids. It was so lovely there. A pearl mist of dewdrops lay on the hush, and, though so late in the year, the grass was brilliant with the first loveliness of April—so restful to pilgrim feet. The asparagus, too, of the garden, as we sat there, was billowy in the breeze, and in its dark-green, fringe-like foliage the dewdrops flashed with stars which the sunbeams were persuading to go with them to heaven and reign there in the light. Beneath the window a bed of lobelia lifted its spires to the blue, and seemed to tell that the teachings of this holy place will keep souls loyal to Heaven. I told the Abbot so, and he answered me—"O, sir, it takes but a little cloud and shadow to stain the glory of the sun." He spoke with a quiet vehemence that told me there must have been some time in his life an exquisite sorrow. He had Mrs. Dana's book, "How to Know the Wild Flowers," and told me he had been showing a lad what *Mikania Scandens* is, and sent him out beneath the walnuts to find it. He must be fond of purple; for his cassock was girded with it, his desk covered with purple cloth, and some exquisite purple wistaria in a vase where he had

been writing. I asked of him permission to go into the chapel and kneel a moment in the sacred Presence of the altar; and when I left he gave me "Benedicite" with that beautiful smile, and said, "Never fail to come to the Monastery when on the hills." On the way to the long avenue I found a young mother with her two-year-old boy, who tottered up to a lusty wild carrot and stood there, as if measuring which were the taller. And the lad had it by half a head. A crow sent this feather to you. I am down the hills now, and feel that I have left the deep anodyne of their peace there in the calm and hush. Harold Anderson wants me to sup with him.

V.

August 22, 1899.

I did not go to the Monastery this morning, Wallie, but to Caltha Swamp, where you and I have found so much pleasure since that inspired 30th of April. I sat and watched the sun shoot golden arrows through the shade, and heard the soft voices that spoke from the water, when presently a well-known voice from the Monastery spoke the accustomed "Benedicite" of their greeting. It was Father Max out with Halle to find the *Twisted Stalk,* and I joined them, for you know how long I have searched for it and not found it. I fared no better this time, nor did they; but I went back with them to the Monastery, and read to the Abbot, continuing "The

Bride of Lammermoor," the book I found him reading yesterday. "It is a pity Lucy's father had not a man's decision," commented his reverence. "He had not grit enough for a nun." After the reading I went out to Needle Rock, looking down unto where the wild carrots spread her majesty's lace on the fields. The sunflowers made a wall of gold in the Monastery gardens, and a few last primroses transfigured the light with their spotless lives. Near me some women were picking blackberries, and a young mother had laid her babe on a bed of ferns in Cleft Rock. A brilliant leaf, like crumpled translucent gold, fluttered down near to him from a butternut tree, and he clutched it with dignified solemnity. Then he talked and cooed to it; but I fear the dainty visitant did not understand the babe, for it remained impassive, with no response whatever. The shadows were lengthening when I left, and the mother with her sweet one was safe at home in the valley. She waved to me from her door. Yesterday I went out into that beautiful pastoral country beyond the South Mountains, and returning stopped at the cottage of a Mrs. Gardener, on the Glad Stream Farm, to drink from the spring. She saw me and insisted that I must come into the house. I did so, and sat and ate the pink centre of a whole watermelon; a large one, too, and there could not be a finer. As we chatted together, looking out on the fields of the soft aftermath burning with cone flowers, she told me the history of a former owner of the farm. He was a hard, selfish man, and was never known to give so much as an apple or a

bunch of grapes to a child. One day a thunder storm drove him to take shelter in the Monastery chapel, where service was being read. He sat and listened to the words of the Old Book, which a priest read with quiet reverence and solemnity. The lesson was from the 12th of St. Luke, and contained the Parable of the Rich Fool. It startled him. He thought of it all the way home, and for days afterward. He dreamed of it; could not get it out of his mind. He had toiled and slaved and worn his life away for years; and for what? For just a burning hell of dollars; that was all. His neighbours called him "Old Clutch Hard." He sat alone one night before his hearth and dozed. Presently he started up. What was it? Nothing but a dream. He fell asleep again, and this time he woke convulsed with horror, and with a ghostly feeling that some one was in the room. And why was he so sure that he had heard a voice? At length the fearful thoughts passed, and he slept the third time. The candle flickered with its last strength; the maple leaves that had burned at noon like fire-brands flitted against his windows with fateful whisperings; from afar the thunder growled on the ominous night, and the lightning tore the blackness. He started to his feet with a shriek. The candle is gone out. A form stood before him, wrapt in the cold steel of the lightning, and the voice that had tormented him for weeks speaks above the thunderings of the storm: "Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee!"

The morning breaks in splendours, but the lord of the estate still sleeps before the ashes of

his dead hearth. He is gone to the Great Account. Mrs. Gardener finished her story, and then Herbert, her son, came in and took me to his room to see his books. His mother gave him "The Temple Shakespeare," forty volumes, in red leather, for his twenty-first birthday July 12. He thinks it ought to be an incentive to greatness of character, being born on the day when Julius Cæsar was born. I told him it was Thoreau's birthday as well, and that I would give him the Journal of the great recluse if he would come to my library. I read him Mark Antony's funeral oration as we sat in the windows of his quiet room, so cool and white, and with a strong scent of mignonette from a vase on his desk. His windows look out on a hill that was thick with cone flowers, that shone like burnished copper. I supped with them, and at 9 he drove me home through the woods, all resonant with katydids.

VI.

August 23, 1899.

The laurel hedge near the front of the Monastery was purple with morning-glories to-day, Wallie, I went so much earlier than usual. A cereus, too, that blossomed late in the night, lingered in its loveliness, seeming to know by intuition that a last worshipper was coming. The Abbot sat in the porch, looking off beyond the walnuts unto the slumbrous, velvety depths of air. He invited me to a seat with him. Mass was

just over, and he smiled as he saw me gaze into the soul-depths of that exquisite flower. He gave me a yellow orchid that Halle Seton found in the swamp below the walnut glade. I had a cup of coffee and a bit of toast with him and Father Max and the "Attic Philosopher." "The Philosopher," with the recklessness of youth, knocked a watermelon from the table. The library shook, and so did Halle, and the Abbot, with assumed severity, told him that football ought to be played out of doors. The melon was sent by Philip Ageweight, whom I think you know, and Halle went down to thank him and to spend the morning with him under his glorious oaks. They are fast friends, and Halle always finds a cordial welcome there. This is how it came about: One day, as Halle was returning from a trouting expedition, he stopped there and asked for a glass of water. It was given, and then Philip, who was alone that day, asked the boy to read to him, as he was recovering from a fever and could not use his eyes. He read him the morning paper, and some of Keats' poems, and finally picked up the Bible and read that majestic ninth chapter of St. John's Gospel, in which the Christ opened the eyes of a man who was born blind. It went straight to the young man's heart, like hot burning coals through the snow; and Halle read it over again, and then again at his new friend's eager request. When he was well he confessed the Christ before the world, and has been a devout and constant communicant ever since. I read with the Abbot all the morning Wordsworth's poems, and that sonnet in particu-

lar on S. Mary, with its noble exaltation of womanhood. Halle came back at noon with some delightful peaches from Philip's orchard.

VII.

August 25, 1899.

There were a number of Indians visiting the Monastery to-day, Wallie, and there were tents for them under the trees, where, long years ago, their fathers ruled. I talked with one of them, and he told me how those wide leagues of glory were all theirs in the dim past—he gestured with the circle of his tawny hand—but the Great Spirit had given them all to His white children, to make the world great with Christ. The trees all round were cut with tomahawks; the flints had yielded arrow-heads and other instruments of death; the water of the brook was once stained with blood; the winds sobbed through the forests, telling the deaths of warriors; the mighty hemlocks, said the chief, held in their speechless bosoms the story of many a ghastly battle-field; "but now it's all Christ's," he added, "and we are Christ's, and yet there are blind white men who preach that Christianity is not true! Indian no think much, but Indian know." And after this he said no more, but a bird filled the hush with such an untroubled Te Deum of song. I noticed the old chief held a prayer-book in his hand, open at the Festival of the Incarnation, and I thought how the hands of his ancestry would have been ready, with Herod, to destroy the Babe of whom that Gospel tells. The Abbot

came and led his dusky friends into the refectory with, "Come now, my children," and it was touching to see those stalwart men stand and use the holy sign over the gifts which God had blessed to their use. I said Mass on the festival, as I told you, that is, yesterday, but I cannot tell you of it till we meet. PADRE.

VIII.

AUGUST 28, 1899.

I am back at my desk again here in the valley, after my work at the Monastery. I had seven services in all, and said Mass, too, this morning at 7 before coming down the hills. How near to Him it all seemed! Just the two lights burned on the altar, and all was so fresh and sweet. It seemed as if the world were just created, and that there could not be such a thing as sin and stains, and broken hearts and ship-wrecked lives. Two of the Reverend Sisters were at Mass, on a visit with the dear folk at Forest Glen Farm for fresh air and health; but none of the Fathers were there, all away for mission work in the towns far and near. I am so much in love with the work here that I find it hard to leave. The place has its own atmosphere of culture, and books, and scholarship, and holy lives. I like the hard oak floors, the wide halls, the rooms always full of light, and the curtains—whether of russet, or Indian red, or purple I could never tell. It lifts one into a new environment, and puts the world so far away, to go into the Chapel, where the lamp burns continually before the Pres-

once of the dear Christ. I sat with the Abbot in the library, looking out to Cleft Rock and Cathedral dome; we were waiting for the breakfast that good Mrs. Bruce was getting ready. The brook near by, with its slow current, widens into a beautiful little lake of sunshine silences, with all its marge flower-fringed, the soft, lustrous beauty of the Indian arrow-head, Sagittaria, with its triune whiteness. Mrs. Bruce comes in with the breakfast—a cup of coffee, a pitcher of cream, hot muffins and a half dozen ears of delicious sweet corn steaming through a linen cloth. I left shortly after the breakfast, and met my dear Harry going to borrow "A Gentleman of France" from the Abbot. I waited for the lad, and we came down the hills together. Oh, a stretch of lobelia was so blue as we entered the Way of the Winds! It seemed as if all the strength of heaven were concentrated there. The day is hurrying on, and when the shadows begin to build their phantom towers, Halle and Philip and Herbert are coming down to sup with me, and go back under the guidance of the stars. Just here a harvest apple falls on the porch: I wish I could send it to you. Am going out now to drench my nerves with mignonette.

IX.

August 29, 1899.

Halle and Philip supped with me last night, Wallie, as I told you. Herbert was to have come, but his work took him to the city for a

couple of days. We had a peach short-cake, an omelette, a dish of spiced crabs, a cup of coffee, sponge cake and peach cream: a nice little supper, I know you will say, and so it was. After supper Philip and I lounged on the porch and smoked, while Halle and my dear mother played chess. Halle has promised Philip that he will not smoke until his twenty-first birthday, and I've never known the lad to break his word. I climbed the hills this morning for my walk to the Monastery, and as I entered the hall the old clock struck 7. The Abbot, coming in at that moment, told me that it struck the glad hour when the ink on the Declaration of Independence was scarcely dry. You see, it is very old. Soon its voice will be hushed; and I thought how soon this full August of manhood's strength will pass, and we wait the summons from that vast To-morrow! The books will be opened, and that Voice will ask, "What hast thou done?"

The old Indian chieftain is still there, and we sat under a Rose of Sharon tree, and I read him from Ecclesiastes, chapters 11 and 12. He was silent a long while, and then answered, with a touch of triumph in his voice: "I am so near unto the Great Consummation!"

The whole place was glorious with blossoms, even the mountain rocks. All the fences, the trees and the sunflower stalks in the garden—all twined and swathed and overrun with morning-glories. Halle had filled vases with them for the Abbot's desk, and the good Father turned the lad and his lessons over to me, saying he would not have the heart to scold after all that purple; but the lad had good lessons, and when I told

the Abbot, he said he fears the purple burns my breast also. Philip is a fine spur to the boy, and keeps him up to concert pitch in all his work, notwithstanding the hot weather. Harold and I are going to Monksrest to-night, trusting to hear a whippoorwill. The old gardener there has invited us. To-morrow the Monastery will be full of "Fresh Air" boys. Goodby.

X.

August 30, 1899.

Well, I have been to the Monastery again, Wallie, and long before I reached it, the glad voices and the shoutings and echoings among the hills told that the holy house was doing another of its many deeds of the Christ's work. A great number of boys, in twos and threes and dozens, scouring the mountains, met me on my way, and won me by their courtesy and deference. Ages all the way from ten to twenty-five. About an hundred of them; climbing trees, running races, picking flowers, fishing the still streams, the flush of June starting in their pale faces. What handsome fellows they will be at the end of two weeks! It is well that August is lavish with gifts of flowers, else there would not be a blossom left on the hills. One lad met me, and was tugging a bushel of wild carrots. He called them roses. I told him that they belong to the *Umbelliferae,* and he answered me that he, too, had an umbrella, but had left it home. I smiled at

the unconscious rebuke, and made no further use of scientific names. At noon they all come back to lunch, with appetites like bears, and then out again to find the strength and the beauty of health. Nothing to do these two weeks to come but what they please. The Chapel was crowded with them when the next Hour was read, and I wish you could have heard them sing the hymns of Holy Church. They threw into them all the enthusiasm of their games. I read to them from Cooper, and they listened with everything else forgotten, so interested in the Indian tales of these same old hills. After the reading, I read them "The Last of the Mohicans:" they wanted me to take them out for a walk, and I took them to the "Avenue of the Ghosts of the Leaves," and told them how an Indian woman said that the souls of fallen leaves pass into the frost crystals until the Spring return. We went down the hills, then into the valley on the other side, and as we passed "Forest Glen Farm" the owner of the estate stood with his son in the porch. They pointed to a musk-melon patch in a field near by, and told me to take the lads in for a feast. There were fifty melons less when we left, but the generous owner will be remembered as long as the dear lads live.

XI.

August 31, 1899.

It is the last day of Summer, Wallie. It comes upon me as a great solemnity. I have said over and over again this morning the words of the

Prophet Jeremiah, 8-20: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Ah me! I see from afar the cataclysm that will overwhelm all this summer world with death. The mountains were resonant with echoes as I climbed this morning, and seemed glad to have their great silences broken up. The leaves begin to feel the influence of the great sunset of the year; encrimsoned with the mystery of decay that has touched the hem of their garments. No such thought, though, was suggested by the faces of the rollicking lads that thronged the flower-fringed avenues. Some of them were just coming in from Caltha Swamp, and were loaded down with grapes; others were helping unload three barrels of harvest apples, that our friend of "Forest Glen Farm" had just brought them. So large and fair, such a creamy yellow and flushed with red, and the whole place spicy with their fragrances. Mrs. Bruce, the house-keeper, looked on, and said as I bade her good-morning, that the barrels would be "licht enough by nicht to raise a batch of bread." One enthusiastic young botanist of about fifteen had a lot of mush-rooms, which he took to the Abbot and told him that I said they were "mush-melons." The Abbot laughed and said the lad had made "mush" of my botany, and I think he had. I took them to the Warrior Rock, and they put their hands on the stone to feel the beating of the hearts of the warriors who were turned into stone. In the silence the locusts and the squirrels and the blue jays filled the trees with the choruses of their glad life, the only sound that answered the listen-

ing boys, but it satisfied them. I told them then how the Indian maiden, for betraying her friends, was turned into the brook that makes its way down through the black shadows of the hemlocks; and one of the lads, with more muscle than imagination, said: "They made soup of her." I said no more. In the beginning of my note I spoke of "The Saved." Do you know who "The Saved" are, Wallie? Well, here is a sermon in fifteen words: They are those divine optimists who have learned how great is God's love for men. I wish you could see how the Dittany touches every path with purple.

XII.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1899.

I heard low, soft voices as I approached Caltha Swamp this morning, Wallie, and found two Indian women on their way to the Monastery. As they rested they whispered a hymn to the Mother of God. Yes, I know you would like to have it, so I send it. I took it down as they sang:

"Sweet mother of Eternity, all hail!
Hear, Mother of High God, a woman's wail.
Upon thy bosom press the child I mourn,
From suffering flesh to Life Eternal borne.
Keep him thine own, until this world's Release
Shall bid a home-sick mother's Calvary cease."

I looked upon their bronzed, patient faces, and thought how many would gladly exchange their unrest for the calm, sure faith shown by these

reverent children of the forest. September lies in swaddling clothes this morning, and as the mountain voices spoke to me, and the silences were sifted through with dust of pearl, I thought how little this new-born daughter of Eternity knows of the wild storms that will make her reign desolate! A last anemone of April has blossomed in the cool moss, and spreads its petals at the new month's feet. How faithfully this dear flower stays with us all the Summer, and the hypoxis, and an occasional bluet! Week after week they have looked me in the face, demanding a ready homage. All the visiting lads were crowded into the Monastery Chapel for mass, and they had taken the dear Abbot's advice, had put the enthusiasm of their games in the Creed and the Gloria in Excelsis. Oh, they sang with such gladness, careless of the coming days of manhood's responsibilities, and the loveliness of the lost Eden seems to have found a resting place in their fine eyes! I read to them from "The Bonny Brier-bush" for an hour, and then, after lunch, went with a party of them to the fields beyond the Caltha Swamp—the fields that you call "The Vineyard"—and where, the lads tell me, there are tons and tons of grapes, and they ought to know. I sat and read near that Ostrich Fern in the swamp, but they went among the grapes—not wild grapes alone; a gentleman, learning where they were from, loaded them down with Concords and Madeiras, and sent a basket of the finest Delawares to the Abbot. The scent clings to me. I feel saturated with it. We left our trail on the hills as we returned.

XIII.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1899.

It was late when I left the Monastery yesterday, Wallie; and as I left the long avenue of hemlocks an old dame met me, and said: "You are late to-night, Father. Eh"—with a shudder—"it will be a coarse nicht on the hills. I trust ye will not meet the Old Man of the Mountains." And she crossed herself as she looked into my face with apprehension. I told her I had no fear, and on I went through the gathering gloom, with the lightning telling the day's death on the clouds. I had reached Brow-wait stone with no further thought of the old woman's fears: when they were recalled by the figure of a venerable man resting there, a pale torch burning at his side. "You are late, like myself," I said, and he answered: "Will you go with me?" And the light flashed on his face as pale as a corpse. "I am not from the world beyond," he answered my inquiring looks, "but one who has lived alone, long years, here on the steeps of God, a student of all the Glory of Heaven that lies round. I am old, indeed, as folk say, for I stood in the full strength of manhood when the eighteenth century was swathed for burial. I have lived more than an hundred and thirty years." Here he rose, and I followed the old scholar with reverence to his house, an old vine-covered cottage just back of the lightning-splintered trees on the left, as we go to the Caltha Swamp—an house which but few know and fewer visit. The door

opened into light and warmth and cheer: a fire of pine knots burning gloriously on the hearth and filling the spacious room with fragrances. I stood breathing the scent, and admiring a vase of coreopsis on his desk—that wondrous combination of the richest yellow and chocolate—when his house-keeper knocked at the study door, glad the master had returned before the storm. She is a Mrs. McDonald, some fifty years of age, a sympathetic voice, and a whole world of kindness and hospitality in her face.

XIV.

September 6, 1899.

The old scholar invited me into his dining-room, where Mrs. McDonald had prepared a dainty supper. Just as we were seated, the good madam heard a knock at her kitchen door—two of the boys of the Monastery, asking shelter from the rain. She admitted them, and the master invited them to sit down with us. They were very glad: I think they found the rain a good excuse. After supper, they came into the study for his blessing and good-night, and then they went into the kitchen to talk with their generous mother. The master dived into a hole and found a bottle covered with the spider silk of a century, and from it poured a choice wine that we sipped, as we sat before the fire in his study. He told me that he had seen me examining flowers many a time this last Summer, and thought it might be a pleasure to us

Original by John DeCamp.

Ageweight Hills.

both to sit and talk of the things in which we are both interested. Then he showed me flowers that he had picked in the Christ's Galilee—hepaticas from Nazareth, bluebells from the Alps, orchids from Brazil, coffee-blossoms from India. He has been a great traveller. A Cereus was expanding at one of the windows, and I went to examine it more closely, when a frightened "quack, quack, quack" at my feet told me that I had disturbed a tame white duck, one of the old scholar's pets. I stooped down and made my apologies, for I am fond of that particular bird, Wallie, as you know. My host opened his guest-chamber, showed me a bed like a drifted whiteness of snow: and told me that I would find a welcome there, and so much better than struggling home through the blackness and the rain. I thanked him: went to bed: watched the dreamy embers on the wall: soothed by the sweep of the wet vines across the windows—and did not wake until the sun was pouring the health and blessing of day into the room. I stayed until noon, busy with old folios and treasures of botany, and was sorry when it was time to come down the hills. I have the privilege, though, to go again.

XV.

September 10, 1899.

Father Max sat on the porch this morning when I reached the Monastery, and said he was so sun-burned that he could hardly tell day from

night. He looked so vigorous and full of health: I know he will do a militant work this Fall. I sat with him in the clear, strong air that had almost a touch of the sting of the first frost, and he told me of his recent mission work to the mountain folk some miles away. He told in particular of an experience that shows how a man's whole life can be radically changed in a moment. A man of wide benefactions among men gave him $100 toward the Monastery fresh air work, and in giving it, told him that twenty years before he would not have given a hundred cents. He had a Carnegie's talent of acquisition and a real love for every dollar that he acquired. His home was hard and cold and comfortless: in his hoarding he denied himself unto the extreme. He sat one night in the ghostly flame of a candle and the pulseless ashes of his hearth, and lifting his eyes suddenly, he found that another man was with him in the room.

"What are you doing here: didn't I drive you away, and tell you I had nothing for you?"

He recognized a poor fellow who had appealed to him that morning, being hungry and out of work. There was no answer; but an overpowering influence from the Stranger held the miser under its thrall.

"Who are you, anyway?"

That Other stretched out His hands and they were scarred!

The miser fell at His feet as dead, and when he waked to consciousness his wounded God was gone. It was all a dream, but from that

hour, the man has been noted for the widest charity and benefactions among them that need.

I took a cup of coffee with the good priest, and then he asked me to go out with him among the hills. We found a group of boys beneath the walnuts, near that little lake all radiant with pond-lilies, and one of the lads was Harry's younger brother. He gave me a beautiful smile, and his handsome face and the sunshine on his yellow hair left on my mind a brightness that made me think of when the rainbow touches the earth with gold. It was a pleasure to me all the rest of the day and satisfied me. I associate the lad's beauty and the Christ's words—"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," and it strengthens me in the things not temporal, but eternal. Harry is back from his vacation and will take supper with me to-night.

XVI.

September 11, 1899.

I climbed the hills at sunset, Wallie, and was at the Monastery overnight. It was the last night there for the boys who have been storing up health and beauty among the hills these last two weeks. They had fitted up the long reception room for some private theatricals, and the place was crowded from far and near, all eager and interested to see what the lads could do. One little fellow spoke "Mary had a little lamb," and in a touch of stage fright, he made the statement that "The teacher turned him inside out."

It made a great burst of applause, and he left the stage in just a blaze of glory. One young man with fine face and manner recited that scene from "King John," between the King and Hubert. He looked a king, too; and Halle, who was Hubert, so threw himself into the meaning that he looked the very villain he personated. The line "Out of my sight and never see me more" was given with superb meaning and passion. A lady gave him a bunch of hot-house "John-quills," she called them, and told him to put a feather in his cap. They all left this morning at 9 with cheers and sobs and wet eyes, and it seemed as if all life had gone with them. Not even a cricket chirped in the brush after they were gone. One little lad took with him a tame white duck, and as they drove down the Way of the Winds, it gave a farewell "quack, quack, quack,"—and that even seemed a lamentation. Ah, the year has gone far forward in its days, and soon will hold the Christ Child unto its withered heart! Then in the purple warmth of the hemlocks, the wind will chant the requiem of its Nunc Dimittis. I sat a moment at Brow-wait in the sunshine, and was glad to have a crow caw a word of cheer. From Brow-wait I went to Pulpit Rock for blackberries where there are some still, large and very ripe and sweet. I met Harold and took him with me, for we can enjoy each other's companionship in silence. The dim aisles and the softened light, and the moist leaves under foot and the smell of rich gums and ripening nuts and grapes were to us an infusion of new

life. The Dittany with its calm beauty was everywhere, and mingling with its soft fringe, the purple bells of the Gerardia. The leaves were like golden coins strewn around. I am back now in my old garden and its subtle fragrances of Mignonette.

XVII.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1899.

AN INDIAN-SUMMER LEGEND.

'Twas in the time of many moons agone,
And on a crag of towering mountain heights,
Within an earthquake-sculptured chair of stone,
A dying Chieftain sat—an Indian old.
His tribe around the withered monarch stood,
And cried: "O Father, bless us ere you die!"
He stretched his arms with yearning to the sun,
And strowed the hemorrhage of its fire abroad
Upon October's woods. And from that time,
The encrimsoned forests hold his legacy,
And breathe its benedictions o'er the world.

Harry and I were at Monksrest yesterday evening, and he told me the legend of old Indian chair. I told him I would put it into verse. I have done it, and think you would like a copy. You should have seen the beautiful flush on the lad's face when I read it to him. He took me into his garden beneath the mountains to see the Northern Spies that are reddening in the sun, and we sat awhile in the light and the shadows and the perfume of the tuberoses that bor-

der the paths. I never saw so many, and they have the full opulence of summer. The subtle fragrance strikes me, and I feel as if brought into contact with a divine presence. It is so warm to-day, and all the trees with their polished foliage are so green: it does not seem possible that we are so near the equinox. The hills, too, are full of blackberries: that long, hard cylindrical berry, and so sweet. For a month now, all round Pulpit Rock it has been full of them, and Mrs. McDonald of Ageweight has made two gallons of wine. How the quality of the berries changes, as the summer advances! There was something about the wild strawberries as ethereal and evanescent as the flush of the rainbow. Then came the raspberries: somewhat more substantial. And now, the blackberries—corporeal, sensuous, of the earth with no suggestion of anything beyond. And so bitter! It is the myrrh, perchance, to swathe the year for burial.

XVIII.

September 14, 1899.

The mountains rang with glad shouts this morning, Wallie, as I approached the Monastery, and all was bustle and hurry—the school-boys have come. Some twenty-five of them—their ages from fifteen to twenty and upward. Express wagons stood at the doors, and others rumbled over the avenues, while the boys were busy looking after their trunks and "personal defects,"

as one glad fellow said to his chum. They gathered round me, and one of them asked me the name of a stalk of mountain mint that he had picked on his way from the station. I told him the scientific name—*Pycnanthemum:* and when I added the translation of the word—"thick-head," one of them slapped him on the back with: "How fortunate, Tom, that right off you should stumble on a thing so appropriate." Soon the wagons were gone, and the trunks all taken in, and the boys putting their rooms in order—or disorder, shall I say? with ten times more noise than was necessary, but even that, I appreciated. While waiting for lunch to which I had been invited, I strolled into the garden, where a lad—to forget that he was homesick—was busy digging worms for a flock of noisy ducks. Vest off, a snow-white shirt front, a crimson bicycle cap on the back of his head, his face flushed with the exercise, a "Cicero's Orations" on a bench nearby, and the gentle waddlers quacking that he was the most practical scholar of his time. He stopped his work, and we sat a while under the morning-glories: the purple blossoms showed heaven in their hearts, a rose-bush dropped crimson at our feet, and a timid rabbit feasted on a pear. In the scent and the hush and the beauty, the lad found solace. The first time in his sixteen years that he had been away from his mother a day. He showed me her picture in his watch, and I told him not to be ashamed of his home-sickness, for if he find not Heaven in his mother's heart and face, he will find it nowhere else. Here a robin thrashed down

from a maple, looked at us and then at a delicious caterpillar with "What's that? Give us a taste." And he appropriated the whole personality of the worm to line a red-breast that has never seen a snow-flake. The ducks looked disappointed, and could not understand how they could have missed such a dainty morsel.

XIX.

September 16, 1899.

Harry and I walked to the Hemlock Valley yesterday evening, Wallie, and as we went through the rye stubble, the sun flushed it into pale gold, and a flock of bluebirds lighted near us. Such brilliancy and warmth of colour, and every one had a song. I took the lad home with me and kept him all night We had a restful little supper of fried oysters and waffles, and a cup of golden-brown Java and Mocha coffee. Then we lighted the hearth-fire and the candles in my study, and enjoyed the sense of cloister quiet that comes with the first closing of the house in the evenings of approaching Fall. My mother and the lad played a game of chess, and then I read them the Battle of Waterloo from Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables." We left this morning before it was light, for I wanted to be at the 6 o'clock Mass, and as we reached Harry's, we saw a light drifting down the black mountain-side; drifting slowly, and ever lower and lower, and burning with bril-

liancy, and shooting spangles of stars. I waited at the spring, and it was Father Max on his way to the valley with some medicine, a morning star of health to some poor sick folk. After he had passed, I went on my way, and climbed the hills to kneel at the altar and cry with that old wrestler of Genesis—"I have seen God face to face!" After Mass we had coffee and hot rolls in the library, and a pot of lovely purple violets blossomed in the window. The mountains were full of glad voices, and some boys were picking hazelnuts near Cleft Rock. The sun shot golden arrows: but their sting was gone and a fire on the hearth supplied the heat that the year has lost. As I left, I found Halle and the lad of whom I told you yesterday coming in from a walk. His name is Louis, and he carried a bunch of Dittany, fond of its lilac blossoms. Halle had that superb triumph in scholarship—Fiske's "American Revolution," and told me he is working this term for a prize in United States History—$20 in gold. I think he will get it. Louis is from "across the pond," as he said, and told me that he and Halle have formed an Anglo-American alliance for the year. I told him that I trust it will spread until the whole Anglo-Saxon race become one, and then I left the lads with my blessing. School opens to-morrow, and I will tell you of it in my next letter. I went down to Harry's to help him with his Latin, and his mother would not let me leave until after dinner. We re-potted his ferns, and then I came back to my study.

XX.

September 18, 1899.

How clear and strong the air was this morning, Wallie, as I climbed up the "Way of the Winds!" The leaves were a pale gold and drifted down with music; death is so beautiful among the trees. Here and there a sunbeam shot through the hush, but they have not the old power. The morning-glories, though, climb and twist and glow with all the loveliness of Summer; they heed not that we are on the verge of frost. A chestnut fell at Brow-wait, telling that the year's work is nearly finished. Ah, me! There are stealthy footsteps on all the silent avenues, and ghostly hands invisible bear the winding-sheet. As I sit here among the rocks of Chaos, looking out toward Century Swamp, the oaks and the maples and the lindens make a sea of fire but the tide of splendour will ebb, and the drear wastes of snow will spread the pall. I was glad to get to the Monastery, where all was life and enthusiasm. The Masters ready for their work, and the boys ready for Virgil, and Cicero, and Zenophon, and algebra. I doubt, though, whether the boys would put it that way and say they are ready. One surely was not, for as I listened to the recitation, he made the statement that "only one straight point can be drawn between two given lines," and never seemed to know that he had made a new departure in mathematics. The Chair smiled, and said to him: "That is real genius;" and we

all enjoyed the laugh that followed. The lad redeemed himself splendidly, though, when it came to Latin. I fear that Louis, of whom I told you, is not a genius with tools. He offered and the Abbot sent him out to put a hinge on a door. The first thing, he smashed his hand, but did not say anything. I am sure, though, that he must have thought. Then he broke a ripsaw and his hammer, and the Abbot coming out to see how he was getting on and finding that he had wasted enough nails to make a door—looked much, but said nothing except that he had better stick to his books hereafter. The lad was gone all the evening, but I noticed, after Evensong, that a bunch of exquisite purple orchids lay at the Abbot's place at supper, and Louis had a glad face again. He knows more about orchids than carpenter-work.

XXI.

September 20, 1899.

The Way of the Winds was strewn with leaves this morning, Wallie, and they made the whole mountain-side luminous with pale gold. There was crimson, too, enough, as if all the sunsets of all time were scattered there. I found the boys of the school busy with their books, but they had not the lean, inquiring look of the scholar in their eyes. The windows were all open, and the ripe leaves falling with voiceless music. One of them drifted silently onto the

page that young Halle Seton was studying, but from the look in his eyes, I know he was miles and miles away from his work. After lessons, they filled the hills with their glad health. One of them took me into the dormitory to see a bag of hazelnuts that he had gathered at Monksrest, and another insisted that I must come into the garden to see the butternuts that he picked up in the glen. They have left their stain on the lad's hands, and I told him that I hope he will be as successful in leaving his mark on the world. One serious-looking little fellow, the youngest of the lot, I found searching the woods, with his eyes on the ground, looking for "the equinoctial line," which, he said, the old Scotch mother told him he would be likely to find at this time of the year. I told him I thought he had searched long enough and I took him off to Caltha Swamp to hear the brook-songs that were sung before man was made. He asked me, as we sat there among the lusty bonesets, why he could not find that "equinoctial line," of which Mrs. Bruce had told him. I answered him that it is one of those things that will be found, when mortals find the bag of gold at the ends of the rainbow, and the lad was satisfied. The cow-bells made music far away, the soft sounds that you and I love so well: and the locusts in the chestnuts forgot that it is Fall. The golden-rod bordered the avenues with yellow fringe of flowers where the drowsy bees found sweetness, and the great purple heads of the thistles mused on many a page of Scottish History. It was all so beautiful. I have not seen the old botanist, the

master of Ageweight, for a long time; to-morrow I shall go there. I think he can tell me the plant that was given you last week.

XXII.

September 22, 1899.

The blue sky breaks through the mists, the rain-clouds are hurrying away, the sunshine is turning the morning into gold, and a voice from Brow-wait calls, Wallie. I must go up to the hills of God.

Well, I have been. There was soothing in the deep purple silence that filled the Way of the Winds, and a shower of blossoms fell from the rain-drops that quivered in shinings from the trees. I went to see the botanist, the master of Ageweight, and he stood in the health and sunshine of his porch to welcome me. He had seen me coming. I wrapped your plant up, and took it to him for classification, and find it is an orchid—the coelogyne—and that it will blossom this winter—white and gold. His porch has a heavy white fringe of Madeira blossoms, and the scent made all the air so soft and delicate. We sat in those restful, hospitable willow chairs, and presently Mrs. McDonald came out to announce dinner. I had no thought that it was so late. But they both insisted that I must stay, and I told them how great pleasure it would give me. We had limas, and tomatoes with a most delightful dressing, and a broiled chicken,

and peach cream and a cup of coffee. I stayed all the evening, and they would not let me come away until after toast and a cup of chocolate at sunset. At 4 there was a great noise of feet and voices—a dozen of the school-boys came to see if they could do anything for Mrs. McDonald. Oh, yes, they could. And she brought out two big watermelons and a basket of peaches, and the lads showed themselves equal to the task. On toward 5 it chilled, and the Master had a fire on the hearth in his study. We sat before it with comfort—the flames leaping and flashing and glowing, and singing the songs of other years that lay hidden in the aged logs as they burned. As we sipped our chocolate, he read me a poem that he wrote some years ago on Nathan Hale, it being the anniversary of the patriot's martyrdom. I will send it you:

A hundred million hearts to-day
Tell forth their praise of thee.
A hundred million tongues extol
Thy death for liberty.

What then is Liberty? The force,
God-given, by which we rise
And overcome this Self, through Christ
Who draws men to the skies.

Thy deed the Master's hand inspired,
Thy deed the chisel thrilled.
Thy deed the insensate stone gave speech,
Thy Country's heart it filled.

What triumph over death and time
And self—thy dying word!
"Only one life to give." Its power
A deathless name conferred.

A heaven of lives as thick as stars,
Such love as thine had given.
Its lightning eloquence, the bolt
By which all hearts are riven.

XXIII.

September 23, 1899.

As I toiled up the avenue this morning, Wallie, a white birch unveiled its lovely face, and asked if I would not like a canoe for a scull. I thanked the tree, and an owl that had overheard said it puzzled him to know what I could do with another skull. "Why made out of a canoe," he mused, "a man would be nothing but a woodenhead." He sat among our old hemlocks, holding a stalk of night-shade over his head for shelter, and he asked me if I would have an umbrella. I met Mrs. Bruce, the house-keeper of the Monastery; I think she had lost her temper, and I offered to hunt round in the wet grass and help her find it. She was not too much out of sorts to laugh, and her laughter was good to hear. The young lad of whom I told you, says the good mother was trying to find that lost "equinoctial line" for a clothes-line, and she threw a chestnut at his head. I stood behind her as she threw it, and she hit me instead of

the lad. The mushrooms on the pastures gave out their nutty smell: pearls trembled on the branches of the walnuts: and all the miles of vista were luminous with the splendours of the arch that spans the storm. It seemed as if all the rainbows of the wasted centuries burned there. I had a little lunch with Mrs. Bruce and the Abbot, after taking the Class in History. It was so restful. The fire on the hearth, and the breaking mists, and the burning sumachs, and the conscience-stricken wind that moaned at the doors. After the boys had taken dinner, I went with Halle to Monksrest to see the tuberoses, and then I came down the hills, for a crow had told me it would clear. I took his word for it: he had learned the truth far up in the Blue beyond the reach of clouds and storms. The spring was like a silver cup sunken in the moss, and I sat with it and talked awhile. A burning stalk of Cardinal Flower held its torch for me there in the restful gloom, thinking that I wanted to read as at other times. It had enough crimson to make a whole sunset glorious, and I feel its glow with stronger emphasis now that the chill of night is coming on. Philip Ageweight is coming up the walk, and I shall keep him for an oyster fry.

XXIV.

September 25, 1899.

A strong tide of gold swept through the Way of the Winds this morning, Wallie, and the mountains were filled with the resonance of Na-

ture's glad voices, because of the passing storm. The rain-drops hung like silver lamps from the trees, and the breath of the morning shook them into the stronger splendours of the light that rolled in from the ocean depths on High. Mighty arches of gold and green and Indian red and purple towered unto the heights; and every tree was smothered and lost beneath the triumph of banners that the year's sunset has tinctured. Yesterday after Mass, the day ran into avalanches of rain that lasted far into the night. It let up a little at 4, and I took Harry and went to see Philip. He had a young railroad man with him over Sunday; a young man who is ambitious to get on in the world, and whom Philip is helping in English grammar and history. I liked his quiet ways, and we all enjoyed supper together. We had sweet corn, and it was worthy of the name. The three of us had Henry Clay cigars afterward, and Harry found solace talking with Philip's sister. There was just a slight sting of ice in the air, I as I stood at Monksrest this morning, and the crows in the highest vaults of the purple looked through the vision of the months, and told with the voices of their undaunted courage that the world is getting ready for another Spring. There is no Winter in the Crows' Calendar. A last blue Lobelia stood with its hands full of sapphires, dropping them wantonly—I thought—into the brook; but then the song that the brook sang was worth it. All the boys of the school were out looking for mushrooms, and not in vain had they looked. Mrs. Bruce stood at a line of snowy linen, and said,

as I greeted her, that it is the weekly festival of wash-day. The Abbot sat in his cloak on the porch, listening to the song of the winds in the old walnut trees. He took me into the library to enjoy the thrill of the fire that Halle had just started on the hearth; and then Mrs. Bruce came in, and spread the cloth and gave us a dainty dish of fried mushrooms that the lads had just brought in. The chestnuts fell all round me, pelting the trees as I came through the woods on my way home.

XXV.

September 26, 1899.

I called for Harry and took him with me to Mass at 6, and we met Philip Ageweight on the mountain-top in the last star-light and the hush. Harry left immediately after the service to get to his office, and Philip hurried for his train. I had the time, so I stayed there among the hills. All the Monastery lawns were strewn with pearls, and the lush of the grass had no remembrance of the Summer heat. The leaves fluttered down at my feet with the story of the sunset glowing in every vein; and the hemlocks swayed themselves in sleep and dreamed of Christmas snows. All round, the rain made melodies: and the dash of the foam-swept brooks, and the soothings of the wind among the pines of Monksrest made the heart glad and the world below forgotten. "I will lift up mine eyes unto

the hills." Here the Angels first sang the song of That Child; and, even now, you have but to put your ear to the world's heart and listen, to hear the throbbings of the old melodies and the In Excelsis Glorias of Bethlehem. The passing month goes on in majesty through wine-coloured woods, and every tree is inspired with Hosannas in the Highest. A last Eupatorium empurpled the brook with its halo of royalty, as I sat there; and a pair of crows on a bough of lichens whispered of all the beauty. They have an æsthetic nature, to be sure; though some are said to know stories to the contrary. The Abbot after the reading—and I read that delightful book on Venice—left me, having told me to sit and enjoy the glowing logs and forget the world outside. I took up a magazine, and read a beautiful story—"Anne," by Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, and it makes you feel that there is no more shock nor wrench in death, than there is in the falling of the leaves. Dear Mrs. Bruce came in and invited me to a dainty lunch, and the coffee was like what you and I used to have when we lived among the orange groves. She talked with me about Melrose Abbey, which she knows as you and I know Caltha Swamp, and many a kindly word she said of Mary Stuart, the injured Queen. There was a splendid strength in her face, as she talked of the days which Scott has glorified in "The Abbot." As I left, she said: "Father, do ye ken Mary's bit answer on marricht to Lochleven?" It was fine.

XXVI.

September 27, 1899.

A large flag floated from the Monastery porch this morning, Wallie, its field of stars filled with inspiration from the light above. The Abbot gave the boys a holiday, for they could not work with battleships and guns and triumphal arches demanding their every thought. He called the whole school together in the library and made a few remarks—and he did not talk for three-quarters of an hour—but pointing to the Flag, he told them to remember that they are citizens of Heaven: and to live so that the stripes of discipline shall become transfigured into whiteness of character and the stars of sovereign deeds for the world's good. Then with great clamour of voices and hands and feet, they rushed out to enjoy the day as they pleased. A party of them went with me to the cave of which the old Indian Mother told them last week. She led the way, and stopped before a rock. "Don't step on that bluet," she said to an eager lad: and her love for a flower won my heart. She lifted a scarlet vine and its purple berries from a stone that had kept its lichen sleep for half a century: and here we passed from the light into the blackness of ages. We went round with torches, Halle and Louie carrying them, the old mother calling them—"The Lucifers." She pointed out the graves of warriors who have been dust a thousand generations. "Here sleep my People," she cried, "and here shall I be buried."

And the light on her old withered face, the echoings of her uplifted voice on the night—awed us, as in the living presence of death. There were arrows and tomahawks and other instruments of warfare there. "But they are all gone—the warriors," she cried, "gone to worship at His feet!" Then she led us out; and I went with them back to the Monastery where we went into the library, and I read to them articles on Admiral Dewey and the great victory of Manila Bay, from the October Magazines. Herbert Gardener called for me about 11, just as we had finished our reading, and I went with him out into the genial summer-warmth and the hush, glad to rest the tension of the nerves. I went home and dined with him and his mother, and we had the first pumpkin pie from the harvest gold of their corn-fields. He is going to see The Olympia on the 29th.

XXVII.

September 28, 1899.

The frost jewels shimmered and trembled with soft lightnings this morning, Wallie. Nature is a grand optimist: thinking only of the splendour and the glory, with no lamentation over the long drear months to be. The great chasm of the Winter is bridged with visions of hepaticas and bluets and of columbines veiling the earthquake-torn rocks with glory. A chestnut fell at my feet while I sat at Monksrest, and a squirrel that had not breakfasted took it for his

own, broke the russet shell, and sat before me, making a dainty feast. The old peach-trees, wearied with the year's work, were preparing for their rest, but the drift of aged leaves told that every naked branch would soon be soft with blossoms. Nature is so hopeful: no looking on the dark side until it be past, and then with thankfulness. The brook was very busy, hurrying on through the smoky shadows with its long stretches of music, the whole way sweet with its breath of melodies. I sat and dreamed a while at the spring under the walnuts, and suddenly, a whisper spoke to me: "Dust to dust!" It was the old Indian Mother. And, oh, so radiant with beauty that withered face! Youth retained, like the blossom in the Apple's heart. She said: "It is another Autumn-tide, and I am so glad that my own pilgrimage is so nearly finished." Just here Mrs. McDonald and Mrs. Bruce passed, going down into Whippoorwill glen for frost grapes. I joined them and helped with the fragrant work, and they told me that I shall have a glass of jelly. They went their way, and I went back to Monksrest with Philip Ageweight who came along, as I sat listening to the falling butternuts. The old gardener was in his lodge, enjoying a hearth-fire. He invited us within, and gave us some peaches, and then we went into his garden to see the long avenues of velvety dahlias, a rich blending of maroon and cardinal, such lavish masses of blossoms, and the sunshine so warm on the dark-green foliage. Beyond the garden, the maples mirrored the flames of the year's funeral pile; and along the fences

to the south, was an acre and more of wild sunflowers. Ten feet tall, as thick as stars, swaying and flashing and showing infinite variations of reddish gold in the dreamy light. A vast cloud-stretch of imprisoned sunbeams: and as I gazed upon them, and could not get my eyes away, life and personality seemed given to them, and I said with the old Patriarch—"This is God's Host!"

XXVIII.

S. Luke's Day, October 18, 1899.

I thought to be with you for a trip to the hills, Wallie, but have not had the strength. A fever that came upon me two weeks ago has not left me as yet, though I have hinted, out loud, several times, that its welcome is gone. I told it this morning with emphasis, using Lady Macbeth's words—to stand not upon the *order* of its going, but to *go* at once. Mrs. McDonald came to see me yesterday, and brought me a basket of chrysanthema scented like frankincense and luminous with frost-jewels. I breathed the life and the health of the hills from their loveliness, and am more content to wait here, though her visit made me dreadfully home-sick. After she had left me, and after the boys whom I am tutoring for the month had gone, I went in spirit to Monksrest for an hour in the dreamy sunshine and stillness. A cluster of purple gerardia opened its petals for an Indian Summer blessing, and a rivulet of sweetness—a song of

the walnut-trees—plained on the air, and sank into the year's withered heart with an anodyne of peace. Then my mind went back to the Festival of the Warrior Angel, Sept. 29th, on which I came away. The fire that burned in the Orient told that the purple hush of the stars was well nigh accomplished, and the mists that rolled up the mountains were like fleeing ghosts. It was hard to leave it all, and "the old sorrow wakes and cries." I have worked hard with the boys, though; and they, too, have worked hard, and that will be a satisfaction when the day comes for me to return. I walked with them to Mass this morning to a little church just out of the city, and the Priest received me kindly and invited me to say Mass on the Festival of Sts. Simon and Jude, the last day, but one, of my stay here. We took a trolley back, and the boys stopped at a green-house and gave me a box of carnations. I have invited the dear fellows to come and spend Christmas with me among the hills, and they have told me with enthusiasm that they will come. I sit in my study here; the fort has just fired the sunset-gun; and the electric lights have just burst into flower. I think of you all among the steeps of God, and long for a smell of the russet leaves.

XXIX.

All Hallows' Eve, October 31, 1899.

I am at home now, Wallie. My work is done; the boys are gone to school; the month in the city

Original by John DeCamp.

PHILIP AGEWEIGHT

is past. Harry Phillips came and spent the last two days with me, and brought me a box of those divine Cattleya orchids. My old garden is ablaze with chrysanthema, and the sunshine this morning melted the manna of the frost into a radiance too strong for mine unaccustomed eyes. I sat and dreamed and dozed in the embers of the year's glory, and at noon Philip Ageweight came and took me with him to the warm woods where we sat for an hour among the dropping nuts, and the scolding squirrels, and the crisp russet leaves, and the clouds that dreamed in the Indian Summer haze. We walked back to the old house, and at 3, he called and took me in his carriage to dine with him. For dessert he cut his All Hallows' cake, and we talked of the dear festival until the shadows came in sombre vesture and filled the library where the sunshine so short a time before had spread the warmth but not the furious burnings of the year's strength. He has written an All Saints' poem and I send you a copy:

I bent yestreen to learn what words
  Old Indian Brook might sing;
Its solemn answerings to my soul
  Strange revelations bring.

It was the gloaming hour before
  All Hallows' Festival;
The stream flowed on in carol tides
  Of passion musical.

The sunset fire spread o'er its face,
And from the odourous breeze
Witch-hazel blossoms fell and clouds
Of reddening amber leaves.

And then I heard a throb of song,
From Heaven it seemed out-poured;
Ten thousand times ten thousand sang,
Their sacred hearts adored.

And then I saw them gathering round
In mist of splendours white;
Their hosts reached out unto the stars
That fill the depths of Light.

Their soft hosanna-chords the brook
Told to my listening ear;
And then mine eyes saw, face to face,
Departed souls draw near.

One came from out the throng and laid
His hand upon my face.
I knew him! Oh, his glorious eyes!
The death-pangs leave no trace.

He took his pencil as we talked, and wrote it all in 15 minutes: and there was a light on his face as if he had seen beyond the veil into this day's reality. I have just been to the door, and there were lights on the mountains—the Monastery boys are coming: Philip is to give them an All Hallows' merry-making.

The scent of the chrysanthema was on the soft twilight as I stood in the porch, and, oh, what

a blaze of glory they were at 3! All along the paths, a very surf of gold from the vast ocean of the sunshine. And not only bordering the paths, but in great squares also, and as thick as clouds of butterflies. They gladden and freshen and exhilarate one as he gazes on them. You think at times: "Surely it is a tangle of humming-birds!" What opulence and strength of blossoming in the dying Summer! Nature's protest against Mortality. The year is passing, not unto decay and the shreds of nothingness: but unto rest and the renewal of its energies, to wake again in the Spring—revivified. How they tingle the nerves! There is a laughter, a joyance among them—they have never heard of the world's sorrows. The breeze stirs them into a quivering of many wings, like bees over seas of honey. And there is nothing coarse nor gross in these yellow blossoms. In colour they are like the witch-hazel fringe on the lorn branches overhead. I look at them again, and find the very likeness of the yellow that makes the evening primroses so refreshing when the oven-blasts of a July day yield to the whippoorwill songs and the soothings of the twilight. And then again, association takes me back to the earliest Spring: the frightened snowdrifts hide in the fence-corners, the russet leaves in all the woods glow like pomegranates, the new foliage is in the first pink loveliness of its babyhood, the ground is warm, and in all the gardens the light-drenched daffodils wear the chrysanthema yellow of the latest Fall. But the boys are in the porch and putting out their lanterns: Har-

ry has just come: the feast is ready. I must stop my musings, and help Philip entertain the lads.

XXX.

November 5, 1899.

I sit looking out on the hills; to-morrow I am going to climb them—my first visit since returning from the city. The Monastery boys who were at Philip's All Saints' Eve wanted to know what I had seen: and I told them how I had seen the Olympia pass up the Bay, and how the city was one vast illumination in honour of the great Admiral, and how cannon and rockets and whistles and acres of flags and millions of souls voiced the great demonstration. A party of them was down to see the race between Columbia and Shamrock, and thought they might see me, but I was not there. The hush is deep all round me as I write—it is night. A hearth-fire drowses in the room: the old clock tells the solmnity of the ebb of the life-tide: the owls strike the tremulous silences, and there are whisperings on the night of fallen leaves stirred by the wind. As I watch the sleepy embers, I recall how I sat in my study some 3 weeks ago, there in the roar, the dash, the hurry of that mighty Babel—and, of a sudden, there came a knock at the door. I thought it was the post-man with letters, but when I opened, there stood the Abbot and Mrs. Bruce and Halle! I

was more than glad. There seemed all the mystery, the silence, the purple splendour of the stars on their garments. "I never thought to see ye, Padre, in sic a place," said Mrs. Bruce; and I told her I had been "sic," or I would have run home for a day, and her smile was beautiful. She had a branch of the witch-hazel fringe that she cut at Monksrest: and the Abbot told me how all the woods were wrapt in rainbow cloth, and all the trees encrimsoned with the year's sunset. But I am here among them now, and the longing is satisfied; the home-sickness gives place to peace. A sigh goes up from the bosom of the night-hush, as I stand in the open door: the year is going down to the swellings of the Jordan. Another century is going back to Eternity to be revivified.

XXXI.

November 8, 1899.

I was awakened from my sleep under the walnuts by the tremulous notes of an owl that flew from tree to tree in the thickening shadows. How soft the notes were on the hush, so full of melody! What were the world's rage and turmoil and distractions to this denizen of the forests! It came with such soothing on the wearied mind, and drifted deep unto the hidden depths of life with health. I called to mind, as I sat there, an All Saints' Festival years ago, when

you and I were on the mountains after the ragings of a storm. The sky a pale turquoise light, and at great height were mist of clouds soft as fleece and flushed with gold. The ferns had a softer brilliancy; the trunks of the old trees were wrapped in steam; pearls of rain-drops lay on the russet leaves that strewed the avenues; a yellow fringe of hamamelis drifted down from the trees that bloom in the year's death. We looked into that owl's home in the old linden, the threshold veiled in twilight; and overhead a squirrel chased a falling chestnut and won. I saw the old linden to-day, and even after these fifteen years of death it is still beautiful. There was a great wealth of sunshine, and the storm-tired hills lay at peace. The calm had no touch of unrest on its face, and wide leagues of majesty were instinct with a power of life that told there is no death. The year's last fragrances were on the air—an hundred pounds' weight of myrrh for burial: but the day, the trees, the withered foliage, the lichen-covered rocks, the heights of the mountains hammered by the everlasting storms, and the splendours of light that the suffocations of night cannot overwhelm—all these told of that "far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory." A crash of triumph rolled from on High, and its burden was—"I am the Resurrection and the Life," while all was "one great vision of the Face of Christ."

I sat until I saw lanterns on the hills. Then the voices and the footsteps of men going home from their work.

XXXII.

November 9, 1899.

The sunshine melted the frost-jewels into softest drops of Summer rain, as I climbed up the heights this morning, Wallie, and every splendour of rainbow light blazed round. I looked into the owl's nest and he sat there undisturbed, the dreamy eloquence of sleep in his beautiful eyes. He knew it was a friend and that he had nothing to fear. The Abbot sat wrapped in his cloak in Cleft Rock, a wealth of glowing russet all around, a moonseed trailing its black-purple fruit, the leaves rustling in the soft breeze, a last anemone opening its frail petals at his feet. He gave me his hand, hardly lifting his eyes. Do you wonder? He was reading—"Glimpses of Wild Life About My Cabin." He had come out for a nerve tonic of silence between his classes. We walked together to Monksrest, and sat there an hour with the genial gardener, who treated us to a bunch of his rare hot-house grapes. A lump of soft coal in the grate kept summer in his little office—his "Vigil box," as he calls it, and from the "Vigil box" we went and spent a moment among his Marechal roses and carnations. The Abbot went back to his work, and I sauntered alone among the rocky glens, enjoying Saint Martin's Summer. The far-off river was drenched with blue, the rocks were fringed with ferns that had the year's soft youth on their fronds, and here and there a bee all dust of gold sang her honeyed

song. I heard the ring of an axe, as I neared Cathedral rock, and found Harry cutting up a fallen hickory for his hearth. He sat and rested with me, and as he reached for his coat, "King John" fell from his pocket. His recreation is not only physical but mental. I told him he had cut long enough, and took him with me to the Master's, and from there we stopped at his house and told his mother that he would spend the night with me. The Master was in his dining-room, dealing out mince-pie to a dozen of the Monastery boys, and Mrs. McDonald at hand with a reserved pie as big as a barrel head. Presently the boys said the pie was "out of sight," and that was every word true."

XXXIII.

November 13, 1899.

I was belated in my return from the hills yesterday, Wallie: the crimson had turned into purple, the purple into ashes. It was night. The stars burned above the blackened world: the mystery of the vast silences was full of comfort and solace. I was not alone. As I passed just at dusk, a lady called to me from her porch, and handed me a packet of poppy seed. She promised them last June, when all her garden was aflame with their fire-coloured blossoms that held their dazzlings for nearly a month. I went with her into her drawing-room, and she played Berlioz' "Sanctus." I feel its passionate fervor

even now. After leaving her, I sat a while on the old fence in Caltha Swamp, and the brook drowsed along sorrowing for the lost flowers. From the swamp I went to the Botanist's, invited to drink a cup of tea with him: but, to my delight, I found on reaching his dear retreat that the tea was to be coffee. Mrs. McDonald said: "I ken weel that ye dinna like tea, Father." What a picture of contentment, as I stood looking into his library windows! He sat before the blazing logs that the lightning hewed; and from a crane in the fire-place a kettle hung filling the room with song, while the white steam mingled with the blaze. Ferns and vines shaded the windows, and blossoms of chrysanthema were as white as ghosts. Violets, too, breathed fragrance on the calm, an owl hooted, and a whirl of startled leaves clouded the porch as I entered. Mrs. McDonald held a lamp for me, and said: "There is a glad welcome for ye." Presently she announced supper; and the snowy cloth, the silver, the china, the books, the drapery all made a sweet picture of home. And the flavour of the coffee was a delicious restfulness. There was a superb "Ivanhoe" in two volumes, and after supper, Mrs. McDonald read Ulrica's death-song. The rich passion of her voice, and her wild eyes, and the flame that kindled her face made her seem verily the maddened woman whom she represented. We felt awed by her eloquent power. After the reading, Mrs. Bruce came with a lantern from the Monastery, to bring the Master some bananas, which the Abbot has just received from Florida.

XXXIV.

November 14, 1899.

I found the Abbot just holding his sides from laughter, Wallie, my last visit there. He was in a great glee. Mrs. Bruce had just brought home a rabbit in her apron. She was on her way from Ageweight when she stumbled on a trap. She smashed the trap, released "the puir beastie," took a stout hickory stick and reasoned with the man that set the trap. The Abbot took me into the library, and made mine eyes hungry with the sight of two volumes on the English Cathedrals, in heavy purple covers. Mrs. Bruce brought in a dish of toast and a pitcher of cider that had just an appreciative sting. When I left I found that the boys had bon-fires of leaves over the mountains, and were roasting potatoes. Halle and Louie came up, and said they could show me the courtesy that General Marion showed a British officer—give me a smoking sweet potato from the ashes. The flames leaped and danced, the pale turquoise smoke scented the air, and the smell was like coming Spring. Ah, me, not Spring: the world lies in its shroud. On the harsh chill was the sweet plaint of a bluebird; there is too much of heaven about the dear bird for him to despond. The wind whirled the last leaves: poor Summer ghosts! and the west was a great hearth-fire of red from the setting sun. I hurried on to Ageweight to forget the solemn voices all around me of "dust to dust." S. Simeon sat with the

Old Book of God on his knees, and his finger was on the words—"The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." His welcome was so cheery, and I was glad that my entrance did not disturb the tame quail that perched on his shoulder. "You are just in time, my son:" and I went with him to close the violet frames. Then I sat with him in the twilight, until the ghastly wastes of the lost day were swept over with the tide of stars. Stephen and Harry called just at dusk with some cress for Mrs. McDonald; and the Master, hearing their voices in the kitchen, sent for them to come to the library. Mrs. McDonald then spread supper, and the boys were obliged to stay. We had a broiled steak, griddle cakes, a salad of white lettuce and cucumber, coffee and toast. I read them "Tam o' Shanter," and I heard the good mother laugh after I was in bed. She is genuine Scotch.

XXXV.

November 15, 1899.

A knock at my door this morning at 7, Wallie, waked me. Mrs. McDonald warned that there were but thirty minutes to breakfast-time. There was a fine fire on my hearth, the flames leaping three feet high, the wood snapping and crackling, and the room all summery with its glow. Outside, the hemlocks looked warm, and the sparrows chattered in their thick branches. How many years these old trees have battled

with the storms and throbbed with music from the Christmas skies!

We had buckwheat cakes for breakfast, and in a dainty cut-glass dish the good mother had furnished just a "wee scrappit" of Dundee marmalade. She is, moreover, one in ten thousand in making a cup of coffee. The Master and I started out at 9 in the clear, crisp air, the trunks of the trees ruddy with sunshine, and every twig sparkling with frost jewels. He was going to see a sick friend and take him some delicacies. We passed through Caltha Swamp, and I thought how many nights the orchids must lift their eyes to the cold far-off Eternity before the Spring. "Here," pointing to a rock, "I sat on Christmas morning, 1799," said the old scholar, "and read from S. Luke, the Birth of That Child; and the brook yonder sang its same soft melodies of sweetness." We went onward, and I could not but mark the full splendid vigour of his life. We found his friend, a young railroad man, sitting in the sunshine of his porch, and getting well fast. He had the morning paper, "The Sun," and that story of exquisite beauty, "Lorna Doone," nearly read through. He said it had made him forget his illness. Herbert lent it to him, and for all time he has done the young man good. The carriage came presently: Mrs. McDonald thought the Master ought not to walk both ways. He insisted that I must come back with him, and I was more than glad to tell him that I would go and take the Monastery boys in History and then return. I did, and he met me on Bluet Ridge. Mrs. Bruce

was with him, and I asked her if she had discovered any more traps. The rabbits have in her a staunch friend.

XXXVI.

November 16, 1899.

I slept at Ageweight again last night, Wallie, and you can understand how astonished I was to wake and find the hemlocks and the ground white with snow. It rested lightly on the old branches like fleece, and the slightest puff of wind drifted it to the earth, where now it is stamped with the rabbits' tread. How great the majesty, how deep the mystery, how real the inspiration of our solemn life here in the woods! No sound of the world's mad life makes a discord; no shrieking whistles, no rush of steam, no thundering crash of the cars; nor saws, nor belts, nor wheels, nor hammers of the mills and the factories; no wild applause of civic life; no rage of shot and shell and battle-field. Nothing breaks the Peace which passeth understanding. Month after month, year after year, the same unbroken calm; the bluets and the columbines breathe out their souls in worship unknown and unheeded of the world: the Calthas turn the swamps to gold, and only the clouds know the mystery of their beauty; the old hemlocks multiply the lichens of centuries and the world's great hosts of souls know it not—the Many are called, the Few are chosen. "My son," said the Master of Ageweight, "go back to the valley

long enough to get your Bible and your gold pen, and come back to leave me no more forever." And I have agreed: he has been a father to me, and more. Harold Anderson is in the study, and has just told an amusing experience that caused a man to change both his paper and his politics. One day last Summer the lad stopped at a place where an old farmer was poring over his morning paper, "The World." He knew him well, so he said: "Why, do you read that!" The man with some sharpness answered yes. And Harold again: "Did you never read how The Bible says, 'Love not The World, neither the things that are in The World'?"

"Well, there, I never thought of that!" So to-day he reads "The Tribune" and has changed his politics. The Master tells the lad he has a persuasive tongue. Mrs. McDonald has filled my room with violets. Harold has gone, so I am going in to be with them a while, and then I am to read Evensong to S. Simeon. Herbert and his mother are coming to sup with us.

XXXVII.

November 17, 1899.

The snow is all gone, Wallie, as I sit looking from the library windows, and there is a sweet freshness about the grass that has not been seen for weeks. The green is so beautiful, as I look toward Caltha Swamp. Herbert and his mother took supper with us last night, as I said. They were driving yesterday, and calling at a green-

house, Mrs. Gardener found a tropical plant full of blossoms, the richest purple, and she brought it to the Master. It stands in the south windows, the sunshine pouring through the petals of its soft loveliness. The Master has had the plant, Lasiandra, but never one so fine as this. Mrs. McDonald opened the violet frames a few minutes ago, and their fragrance is already on the air. I looked into that hole in the hemlock back of the violets, and a pair of kindly eyes met me undisturbed: they felt it was a friend. Halle is in the study for a moment, and has brought the Master a box of Cypripedium orchids—a spotted green and bronze. They will last a week. The lad will dine with us to-night: the Abbot, Father Max and Mrs. Bruce, also are coming, and as I write, Mrs. McDonald is getting a turkey ready for the oven. The Master wishes me to invite you, and says he will sit and look toward Bluet Ridge at 5:30, for the gleam of your lantern. It is a pleasant feature of our life here in the woods, to sit and watch the darkness gather, and then the lights of men on their way home after the day's work. The blackness is so solid, the wind moans, the chill pierces to the heart—and then the lights break on the scene with a gladness that takes all the fear out of our lives. The logs blaze with great brilliancy and enthusiasm, and the library windows are open toward the warm south. A little stream trails a soft silver cord down the rocks, and there on a sunny ledge, Halle who has left the cabin sits reading "The Second Jungle Book." Kipling has taught so much

tenderness for animals. The lad had a magazine with him lately at the cabin, and he sat in the ingle just lost in its intensity. I asked him what he was reading, and he held me the title, "The Trail of the Sand-hill Stag," with all its wild leagues of glorious health.

XXXVIII.

NOVEMBER 18, 1899.

I have been in the city, Wallie, to get "Ben Hur" for the Master. In two volumes, orange cloth, the "Garfield Edition," it is called, with no end of illustrations. They are delightful books to handle. I wish you could have heard the noisy welcome that the ducks gave me on my return. They followed me way up on the front porch, and I had to throw them a head of lettuce. I brought "The Lady of the Lake" and "Tales of a Grandfather" for Mrs. McDonald, and when the dinner was an hour late, she said, as she served it: "I burnt the fule up and had to roast anither." She got so interested in the daughter of the exiled Douglas, that she forgot she had a dinner in the oven. The Master said: "Scott has been doing that kind of mischief ever since he lay down his immortal pen." I found her in the sunset later, the Bible open in her hands, but Scott in her lap. She is too practical, though, to lose another dinner. We dine at two this week, and after it was over to-day, Jamie drove the Master and myself down to call on Dr. and Mrs. Ageweight and hear a

word of Philip. The doctor is very glad that Philip is studying for his father's profession. We sat in their quiet drawing-room before a solid hearth-fire of hickory, and after a Baldwin apple, left in time for Evensong at the Monastery. We brought the Abbot and Father Max, Mrs. Bruce and Halle home to drink a cup of coffee with us. The Master and the Abbot drove and the rest of us walked. We had a broiled fish, and the supper room was so warm and bright, while all without was solid blackness. The vines sobbed mournfully against the windows; an owl hooted in the hemlocks, and the echoes from the rocks answered him. The Winter may come to the threshold, but cannot pass the doors of Age-weight. A mile away at 9 the light of the Monastery carriage shone, coming stealthily, noiselessly on. Because of its brilliant electric light the Abbot calls it "Wandering Star," and I watched it out of sight on their way home. It turned all that drear avenue into day. They took with them Stephen, who had called to see the new books. Just hear that owl!

XXXIX.

November 21, 1899.

I was in the valley on Sunday, Wallie, after Mass, and two of the Master's crows came down to find me. I wondered, as I sat with the dear ones, if you would hear the birds. I went to see Harry, and took him with me to Philip's for supper. His father and mother were so glad to

have him home for the day. We had waffles and maple syrup that was made in the woods last March—the syrup I mean, not the waffles. While we sat at table a box was brought to Mrs. Ageweight. She opened it, and found it packed full of mignonette. Some of it was given to me, and I am drenched with its searching fragrances even now—Tuesday morning. We left at 9, and I took Harry home, to stay all night. We sat in the library for an hour and the lad read "Froude's Cæsar," one of the best looks ever written. The wind made soft music among the leaves of that fine apple tree on the south; and the moon drifted silently up above the hemlocks, touching all the shadows with silver. The light broke through the evergreens and made a window that showed the water of Caltha Swamp soft with the calm blue. In the dim light of the garden I saw a beautiful owl cast the light of its eyes on the dial face to see what hour it was, and, telling my fancy to Harry, he quoted from Tennyson: "Late. Late. So late! What hour I wonder now?" Mrs. McDonald gave him a cup of coffee and griddle cakes, and he left in time to get to his office yesterday morning at 7. After he left, she and I went out for a walk to the woods. She wanted to make a nut cake, and thought we might find some few nuts still under some famous shag-barks that she knew. We found not a few: the ground was white with them, no one had been to the trees at all. We got together a bushel and Jamie took the cart and went for them. She made the nut cake and gave the Monastery boys a feast last night—just to re-

mind "the puir bodies" that Thanksgiving is near. We walked this morning to Monksrest, and the gardener has a bed of cucumbers yellow with blossoms. Stephen has taken the Master out for a drive.

XL.

November 22, 1899.

The sunshine broke into crimson, the hour the new day was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and filled my bed-chamber with the glow that has so much cheer and comfort in it—the glow that comes only in the time of frosts. I like to stand the first thing in the morning and look at the ashen trunks so thick on the mountains and flushed with the warm light. And through the wide stretch of woods the heat quivered silently, this morning, and every lichened bough glowed with ruddy health. Not a sound in all the forests, save that a bluebird on a swaying branch told that Spring will come back again. The fire on the hearth was eloquent and made so much music, that I did not hear footsteps in my room, until a hand lay a most exquisite branch of stephanotis on my face. It was the Master. He has been up since 5, and was just returning from Pulpit Rock, where he had been to wave his lantern to Philip, as he started out for his train. The Stephanotis he cut from the green-house, and it will fill the study with the life and fragrance of its white soul all day. Mrs. McDonald and Mrs. Bruce have gone to

the city. Mrs. McDonald wore her mother's wedding-bonnet, and asked me if I thought it would do. I told her that Society would think it a *new* fashion "brent new frae France," and every woman of Gotham would immediately adopt "the McDonald." Stephen has the Master out for a drive. The lad wants to show him how well a new colt behaves himself. They will stop and bring Herbert back with them, and the four of us will take lunch together. Mully got into the garden a little while ago, and was deeply offended that she was driven out before she had time to see the violets. Jamie showed her the pitchfork, and with queenly toss of head and hoofs and tail, she returned with some spirit to her own quarters and there munches the cud of discontent, though Jamie threw her an armful of "Kale blades." It is now 5 P. M. The boys left at 2. The twilight is deepening. I see lanterns a mile off: the carriage is coming.

XLI.

NOVEMBER 23, 1899.

I went up the Way of the Winds this morning, Wallie, and halted a moment at Brow-wait. The veil of leaves is gone, and the withered year shows the mystery and the splendour beyond. A branch of Hamamelis swayed heavily beneath a robin's weight, and the bird looked so beautiful against the soft sky of pearl and gold. He came from the Monastery gardens, and has the courage to spend the Winter there. I found the

Abbot on the porch, giving some directions to a gardener. After he had finished, he invited me into the library, and as we talked he told me a bit of the gardener's history. Some years ago Mrs. Bruce waked the Priest at night and told him there were thieves in the house. He slipped on his cassock, and went down quietly to the library. There a man covered his breast with a pistol; but he, with no thought of self, said to the man: "Sit down. I, too, am armed." And with that he took a Bible from his breast. The trembling thief dropped into a chair. The Abbot seated himself, reasoned with the man of righteousness and judgment to come, prayed with him, baptized him in a silver bowl that he would have taken away, and then gave him a bed for the night. He never left the good Priest, and from that hour to this, has been a man whom The Christ approves. We went out on the porch again, and the tropical plant of which I told you rained its purple blossoms down, covering the Abbot with their royalty as he talked with me. And he said with that lightsome smile: "You see it *is* the fall of the year, my son." A wild cherry-tree beyond the walnuts is still full of fruit, and the robins are having a feast. They are not an ascetic bird by any means. Mrs. Monroe and Stephen came along, as I resumed my walk, and told me if I would drive home with them, they would give me some mignonette for my study. I would walk miles to enjoy that marvellous fragrance. I spent an hour with them, had a piece of toast and a glass of cream, and Stephen read "The Bigelow Pa-

pers" aloud to our enjoyment and profit. Mrs. McDonald was on Bluet Ridge, as I returned: and with both hands outstretched, she cried: "Ah, ye are a welcome sicht!" We walked home together, and now I am reading to the Master.

XLII.

November 24, 1899.

There was a gentle tapping at my door this morning, Wallie, and after some little time I answered it. I found your tame duck there. She waddled in, bowing and jabbering and getting between my feet, and ended by laying an egg on the hearth. She was determined that I should have a fresh egg for my breakfast, and I had it. I told Mrs. McDonald, and she said—"The pretty fule!" The raindrops made music on the roof in the night, and on the leaves that strewed the ground. I lay long time and listened, a soothing in the melody that the world has not for its children, and heard only where the bluets gem the forests with enamels. I was just yielding to sleep when a meteor shot splendours on the night. I sprang to the window, but in a second it was gone. A light, though, appeared in the distance, and I said: "It has re-made itself, and is walking the black night with cheer for men." It came nearer and nearer, and presently there were voices, then the crush of leaves beneath the feet. How sombre and weird the old oaks looked, as the lantern flashed

on them! It was Mrs. McDonald returning from a call on Mrs. Bruce, and Halle was with her. In a moment he knocked at my door and brought me a last evening primrose that the madame had plucked "from the bosom of the nicht;" and all night long it made a halo of pale gold on my pillow. I kept the lad all night, and we sat for an hour and read before the hearth. He found companionship in "Knickerbocker's History of New York," two rich volumes that I have just added to my books. A Will o' the Wisp wandered alone in Orchis Valley, looking for the flower we love; but a voice from the swamp where the Calthas sleep embalmed in gold told the spectral botanist that he must wait. All the morning the Monastery bells have tolled a requiem for that departed statesman and ruler—the Vice President. The lightning brought the tidings, and the Church of God tells the world that the Last Enemy has made the sons of men poorer by his latest conquest. Mrs. Bruce has just sent me a last wild rose from Cedar Aisle swamp.

XLIII.

November 25, 1899.

I sat in last night's twilight, Wallie, and the leaves of the old apple tree made a translucent veil between me and the sky. Far off toward where the Andersons live, a hickory tree is still full of leaves, the richest copper and red bronze. Thus far it has fought with Atropos and held

its own. Beyond the forest, the mountains in their majesty stretch onward unto the horizon where the sky stamps them with the seal of the Upper Day, and all wrapt in the slumbrous light. There is a greatness taught by the hills that makes all Earth's cares so trivial. I sat on the lichened fence in Caltha Swamp this morning, while Stephen and I were out for an after-breakfast walk, and a sunbeam came rushing up the valley, impetuous with youth and glorious in power. There were splendours on his face, as he glanced hither and thither: and seeing a little stream bound captive, he went and crushed the ice-shackles in his grasp and set it free. Then the stream flowed on with summer music, and in its voices a prophecy of what next Spring will do throughout this whole vast realm of frost. We saw your friend, the eagle, on a lightning-bleached crag, and he looked so proudly round. I am glad that the gunners dare not approach the Master's domains. We went to Herbert's, and men in the fields were husking corn, and pumpkins lay round like fallen suns. Mrs. Gardener took us into her store-room and showed us a dozen golden pies and as many of mince: she is getting ready for this coming Thanksgiving. The student heard us, and we persuaded him to come out with us, and we took dinner together at Stephen's, enjoying a dish of pot-pie as light as foam on the brook. I am back at the cabin now, and a linnet fills the whole house with song. And he is not in a cage: the Master has no fetters for his friends. Mrs. McDonald just here came to my desk to show

me a basket of violets and ferns that he is going to take to Mrs. Ageweight. She is going to take him out for a drive. I wish I could send you a breath of their fragrance. The dear scholar came to me a moment since with his Bible, his finger on the word—"I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills;" and he said: "I think it a prophecy of that first Christmas night, seen by David on Bethlehem's Hills a thousand years before."

XLIV.

November 27, 1899.

Yesterday was the Sunday next before Advent, and we spent it quietly here among the hills. We were at both Masses and Evensong, and after dinner, Harry, Stephen and I went out among the russet leaves and the hemlocks. They came back with me and took supper. This morning I am alone: the Master and Mrs. McDonald have driven to the Monastery to hear a rehearsal of Thanksgiving music. Stephen, of course, is there, and will come back with them to spend a half hour with "The Fern Bulletin." A robin sits on the hemlock near the study windows, singing his courageous song. The year is withered, the trees bare, the leaves whirling on the wind, the mountain avenues hard with frost: but this bird with his fine optimism ignores it all, his song is full of life, there is no discouragement in his breast. A full set of Thoreau was sent to the Master last week for a Thanksgiving gift, and that means hours of spir-

itual joy this coming Winter. His pen portrays a life so infinitely removed from all that is sordid and selfish. There would not be a suicide in the world if the unfortunate had within them the resources of that exalted ascetic. I sit before a fire that snaps and roars and shoots lightnings round, the sun fills the library, and every tree outside is streaked with warm light. The robin has come into the house, has hopped about the floor, investigated a nook in the fire-place that he thinks would be a fine place for a nest. Now he sits on my desk, watching the movements of my pen, and chattering all the while. He seems almost to know what I have written—the dear bird! He is gone now, but he left the warm crimson of a feather behind. The Master, Mrs. McDonald and Stephen have just come, and brought with them a fresh draught of the world outside. We will keep the singer for lunch. He called on Philip yesterday and found him with a severe headache. His little niece came and brought a beautiful white duck for him to see. The bird said "Quack, Quack!" and the medical student said it was a personal criticism of the Profession. Mrs. McDonald says—"A michty wise bird."

XLV.

November 29, 1899.

The Master and I sat yesterday, Wallie, and watched the day into decrepitude. The naked trunks and branches of the forests against the

sky told that its reign was finished. Clouds in weird vesture attend the pageant, and here and there one as if scourged by rainbows. The funeral pyre of the Lost Yesterdays is prepared, and another King of the sapphire throne is burned. Night comes and smothers over the ashes with blackness and all is lost to the watching eyes. The heavy purple cloth shuts the library from the world outside: the logs of the hearth burn with summer in their hearts; as we sit dreaming, the Monastery bells ring the Angelus through the mountains, and if there be the requiem of the lost day in the strains, there is beside the sure gladness and triumph of Tomorrow. Mrs. McDonald comes in, puts an end to reverie by telling that supper is served. She opens the doors between the library and the dining-room—and the glass, the silver, the linen, the centre-piece of violets, the dainty savors of the supper were all so delightful. She had a dish of trout garnished with nasturtium, and was as pleased as the Master. It was her turn then to be astonished, for the Master had remembered her birthday. She stepped to the kitchen for a moment, and when she came back, she found at her place a cut-glass bowl of Cattleya orchids. It was delightful to see her pleasure. Harry was here for the night, and Mrs. McDonald had some of her famous waffles for him. He enjoyed looking over a lot of Christmas gift books that came to the Master last week by express. They will be given out to the boys Christmas Eve, but there are a couple of them which the Master would not show the lad. I

got him up in time and drove him to his office, and the stars lighted us on our way. It is hushed this morning. Not a sound in the bleak woods. A dull ashen colour came with the sunrise, and there is a dream of snow in the clouds. The old trunks look centuries older. The Master and the Abbot give a load of turkeys through the hills for to-morrow. And the boys will be here to-night for a little feast.

XLVI.

DECEMBER 1, 1899.

December with its great aggregate of festivals and splendours is come. Alleluia! Mrs. McDonald stood with me, Wallie, watching the sunrise, and she said to the new day: "Ah, ye had a long black journey through the nicht!" A tiny rivulet flashed on mine eyes late in the eve of Thanksgiving. It was like a thread of silver, and could have been held in the hollow of an hand. I thought how all the rivers are born among the hills; and how they are swathed in the light; and how their Cloud-Mothers weep over them with farewells, before sending them forth from their fountain homes, out into the vast world with their blessings for Mankind. It was a fine night, and the hills were hushed. The stars came close down, and there were signal fires kindled at Ageweight and the Monastery and Monksrest. At 5 A. M. to-day, the Monastery bells rang out the summons to the Christ's Presence, and then Mass again at 11 with the

Original by John DeCamp.

MRS. McDONALD.

Chapel crowded. The Abbot preached on patriotism and a deeper spiritual love for the Flag. The Master and his guests went into the library a while with the Abbot, and then all drove home to the cabin, and we dined at 2. The National bird was roasted unto the richest brown, the cranberries and the Baldwin apples shone like the Prinos berries in the swamps, the sun made radiance on the glass and the damask and the silver, the aromas that drifted in from the kitchen were in themselves a feast. The table was fragrant with carnations, and our dessert was green-house strawberries—Brandywines. Every place was filled; and, by the Master's kind permission, the two lads whom I tutored that month in the city had a welcome seat with us. The day was hushed, and a light of pearl and gold lay on the hills until sunset. It was a day of balm and rest on all the mountain-side, and one hardly realized that it was gone, until the vast silences were filled with stars. The guests are gone now: the two lads, Frank and Douglas Kimball have gone upstairs, gloriously tired out; the Master and I sit alone in the library, and the embers trace sleepy shadows on the wall; our minds are bondmen to dreams. I feel that the pages of my book are steeped in Lethe. I must draw the curtains, shut out the world, commit myself to the kindly stars. My last drowsiness of thought is of that furious wind, a few days agone, that raged against a branch of an apple tree in flower near a ledge of rock. How strange to see apple blossoms in November! The soft pink petals fluttered quietly down to the

bosom of a Symplocarpus, and the wind might as well have stormed the rocks themselves as that sturdy plant.

XLVII.

DECEMBER 2, 1899.

Yesterday evening at 5 we sat and watched the lights drift on the great deep of night; tired men hurrying to the rest and haven of their homes. Stephen was with us for supper, and when the meal was finished, we sat in the study until 10. The quiet of the night rested in the rich folds of the drapery, the candles gave their pale radiance, the logs filled the room with summer, and the books led us into the presence of the truest aristocracy in the world. Stephen read "Woodstock," and the Master told us of his visit there in the long past years. After breakfast Stephen and I went out into the woods of grey and gold, and I walked with him to his home. We came upon the apple blossoms against the ledge of rocks, as I wrote you last, and the lush of the grass was all pink and white from their scented petals. The brook dashed little silver bells against the rocks; dandelions looked out from the drifted leaves: and a choir of bees sang that it is still a land of honey, although the year has ebbed out unto the Lost Yesterdays. We stood at the gate of the avenue, where last Spring that one blazing hawkweed stood sentinel, and thought how short a time ere the hills will be covered with flowers again as thick as stars.

Many voices of the woods made music, welcoming the new month—the child of the year's old age—that lies swathed in fringe of clouds and sunbeams; and a crow whispered that the little hand of the new-born Prince as delicate as a pink shell, will never wield the sceptre of a stern King. His reign will be mild: and Summer will not weigh anchor for The Vale of Avalon, until the Christmas songs shall have filled the dome with worship. Returning, I found the Abbot on his porch; the boys are all at work again; Mrs. Bruce is trying to subdue the chaos that took possession after the National Feast. I went to Cleft Rock, and a bush of red berries burned me a welcome. At Monksrest I found a perfect wilderness of morning-glories, the deepest softest purple, hundreds upon hundreds, twining, twisting, clasping, their leaves a luxuriance of green against the light. The frost came and looked upon the sight and then sped away, radiant in its dust of crystals, feeling that here it had no place. The rest of the day I will spend with the Master in quiet.

XLVIII.

December 3, 1899.

The Master and I watched yesterday's sunset, from the library windows, Wallie, and then all the clouds girded their golden cinctures and sped back unto the Orient to strew the fields of the East with the fire seeds of another day. Then came the darkness, swift and thick and silent;

and then the lights on the hills of weary men going back to their cosey homes. We drew the curtains, and the world was narrowed unto the bounds of our candles and the hearth-fire. A blue-bird sang the day to rest, and in the morning, too, his voice drifted on the clouds of incense that rolled among the hills. A bunch of Winter berry and ferns and witch-hazels and twigs of hemlock with their burrs is on the desk in the library, and gives us all the concentrated beauty of swamp and forest. Stephen walked back to the cabin with me after Mass this morning and brought them to the Master. We kept him for breakfast, and we went back to the later service together, the heavy Gregorian music, the sun flashing on the uplifted Host, and a vivid picturing of the Last Judgment. We are all in the library, Harry is with us and will stay all the early evening. The other boys will hardly be with us again until the 23rd. The dining-room was like genial spring weather, while the air outside was like sparkling cider. Mrs. McDonald gave us a roast turkey, cranberry, and a mince-pie for dessert. We had, instead of coffee, a glass of cider that stung like the air. A stalk of chrysanthemum, a month ago, crept close to the library windows to get a blessing from the hearth, and there it remains to-day, in all the brilliancy of its sunset gold. The owls here in the dim light say that the Winter has changed its character, and that September, like Persephone, has stolen back again. Beginning with this Advent Sunday, Father Max gives 5-minute talks at Evensong. To-day he defined

Death as the condition in which a soul is incapable of holiness. We are just in from Evensong: Harry is with us. The lights are on the hills again—the devout folk going home from the service. The Master is reading the Prophecy of Isaiah, that great Niagara crash of The Christ's triumph in Men's souls.

XLIX.

December 4, 1899.

The day has changed, Wallie, from grey to gold, and it is like Spring here among the hills. The Caltha Swamp is bordered with grass like April, the woods are sweet with scent of rains, and the branches of the trees hang tremulous with pearls. The hemlocks are warm, and the blue-bird that came last week continues his stay among them. The world outside does not invade this realm of Peace: there is here continually that strong health which draws souls nearer into the skies. The Master has gone for a morning walk to the Monastery, and as I lift mine eyes he is coming back. As far away as Bluet Ridge I see a bunch of Prinos berries in his hand, burning with its globes of fire. Jamie trusted himself to the guidance of a star and went down the black mountain-side to get a box of orchids sent by Mr. and Mrs. Clark, in remembrance of their Thanksgiving visit. The box is on the porch, and will greet the Master on his return. The green-house has no end of blossoms this morning: the banana-tree has

some fruit almost ripe, and there will be some fine oranges for Christmas. Mrs. McDonald has just filled the dish with violets, so that Heaven will look into the Master's face when next he takes his seat at the desk. I stop to put my face down into their fragrant depths to worship their pure souls. The fire burns with dreamy voices, with now and again a tongue of flame that tells how soon Atropos will stop cutting short the Day's cord of life: the weary journey to the depths of the Solstice is nearly finished. The sun will soon turn back again. We have finished dinner and are back again in the library with its welterings of sunshine. Stephen opened the box that Jamie brought from the station, and it was full of Cattleyas and Dendrobiums, fresh and vigourous, full of buds and blossoms. They are all potted and in the windows, and we are all enjoying them to the utmost. The lad is going to take the Master out for a drive, and they will stop to leave a Cattleya with the lad's mother. With what haste Harry will get here after hearing of them! The buggy is at the door. They are gone. I see them sauntering over Bluet Ridge. The colt behaves with great dignity.

L.

December 5, 1899.

I went yesterday far beyond the bounds of the mountains, Wallie, and returning, talked at the road-side with a man who had stooped to pick

a last stalk of gyrostachys for his little daughter at home. As we talked, a man with a gun over his shoulder passed by; and my new acquaintance said: "I used to shoot, but have not touched a gun for years." Pointing in the direction of Ageweight he continued: "It was over there." Then he told how he had sat one day on a ledge of rocks, his dogs around him; when suddenly a man stood before him, ordering him away. His feet made no sound on the gravel road; he waved his hand and the sunlight passed through it: he seemed like one that had been long time dead. The rabbits crept to him for protection, and the dogs crouched in fear at the hunter's feet. "I did not need the second warning to go," added the man. "And I have never touched a gun since, for fear of meeting that dreadful apparition." I told the Master, and he quoted quietly from Hamlet: "I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."

The mountains are cold to-day and the wind is harsh. Winter is everywhere, and no place is warm but the hemlocks and the swamps with their red berries. We appreciate the hearth-fire, and sit and watch the thousand generations of sunset that burn in its depths. It held me a willing captive, and I had to rouse myself to go to Monksrest. I contrasted the Puritan severity with the tropical languor that filled all the drought-burnt avenues last August. The greenhouses there are still ablaze with summer, the morning-glories still lift to heaven their purple chalices of light. I spoke to the old gardener of his love for them, and he answered me that

it is the most soothing colour in the world. These blossoms have but a few hours of life, but they burn the memory with splendours that last a life-time. Mrs. Gardener will take my note to-day, and on her return from the valley will stop and dine with us. We had letters to-day from the boys, and they are busy getting ready for Examinations.

LI.

DECEMBER 6, 1899.

I was out on the mountains last night, Wallie, with Harry who was looking for a Christmas tree. He cut a young spruce that drenched all the way home with its incense odours. The moon made a luminous silver mist through all the avenues where the frost jewels glistened like stars, and the old trees threw the shadows of the 16th century across our way. It was cold though, and I took the lad back to the cabin with me for an hour. He read "Macbeth" until 9, and then we prevailed on him to stay all night, and that Jamie would take his tree down the mountains in the morning. Mrs. McDonald stole in before we were awake this morning, and put fresh wood on the sleeping coals, and presently the flames flashed up with scent of dried moss and leaves, the delicious smell that reminds one of the hidden retreats of the forest when the moccasin orchids are in bloom. After Harry left, I climbed the hill where the Master has had some wood cut, and found a com-

pany of snowflakes looking round for winter quarters. They are as light as thistle-down. How strange that they can block the world's progress! I paused a moment at the Indian woman's grave, and thought how deep the mystery that here should be the Gate of Life! The wind was soft in the pine tree over her grave, like soothing voices from that Paradise of rest. A robin sang his glad song as he feasted among the warm cedars, and I found a dandelion on Veronica Pass that had all the gold of May on its disk. The dainty blossom in its efforts to find the sunshine has had the courage to defy the merciless frosts, and for the lesson that it taught, I held it close to my heart in love. I went then to the Monastery and read Matins with them; and the Gregorian music, and the Advent Psalms were so appropriate for this bleak stern world of hills. Of course, I had to extend my walk to Cleft Rock, and then to Monksrest, where I tarried a while with the old gardener who was cutting carnations and violets. I contrasted the nakedness with the June nights when all the air quivered with the songs of whippoorwills. Stephen came along and I took him home with me for dinner. We had a roast turkey.

LII.

December 7, 1899.

Atropos sped to the east and barred the progress of the day again, Wallie; and evening after evening in the gates of the sunset, the same

remorseless Fate cuts short the day's cord of life, and the withered minutes are strewn round the Solstice, while the year laments the buds of Time that would have developed into the finest fragrances of Light. Two men have just passed, one in his carriage. His home has all that the luxurious life of to-day can give. The other man has very little of what the Scotch would call this world's "gear." And yet there is in his life a peace, a calm, a glory that the other man would give all his wealth to obtain. The man of little means can walk to Monksrest and spend a few minutes with the old gardener in the purple splendours of the morning-glories, and go away again with an intense joy that nothing can disturb. His wealthy brother has no joy. What makes the difference? The many call the one man a splendid success, but his careworn face tells that he is not satisfied!

There was a light snow yesterday, and then the sun came out again with the soft brilliancy of Spring. The flakes lay on the russet leaves like white violets on dainty shells of pearl, and on the bushes of the swamp they lay in long stretches of whiteness like shining azaleas. The Master sits before the hearth with his Bible. He has just read me from The Psalms the line, "All the trees of the wood shall rejoice before the Lord." And the minstrelsy of the forests as I write makes the words as true as when they first flashed from the Poet's burning heart in that long ago. Mrs. McDonald is busy and glad to-day: the Abbot and Father Max, Stephen and Halle, are to dine with us at 6. She has a "brace o' fules"

and a turkey, a dish of spinach, a quince jelly-cake and a cup of coffee. The centre piece will be a vase of Marechal roses, and the four large silver candle-sticks with their candles are tied with purple satin bows. The table looks beautiful, and she is justly proud of her handiwork. The lawn is a soft green, and a dandelion lifts its face in thankfulness. Mrs. McDonald has put a protecting leaf round it. The Angelus! It is noon.

LIII.

December 8, 1899.

I watched the dusk permeate the twilight yesterday evening, Wallie, and then the lanterns flashed on the drear hills, as on other nights. The bell rang out clear and thrilling for Evensong, and I went, meeting with Mrs. Anderson on the way. She had a letter from Harold in the morning. Father Max had a five-minute talk on The Judgment, and said that the truest conception of its meaning is by the man who strives more and more to make his character like the character of Jesus Christ. The Bar of Conscience—it is the Bar of God. He who is to look The Christ in the face the Last Day must see Him now in his own triumph over self. We all walked together to the cabin after the service; and the lights and the summer warmth from the hearth welcomed us. Just as we sat down to dinner, there came a quiet knock at the kitchen door. Mrs. McDonald answered, and we heard her exclaim with surprised pleas-

ure: "Dear bairn!" Harry had brought a basket of Northern Spies to the Master, and the Master, hearing his voice, would not let him go. We kept him not only for dinner, but all night. Mrs. McDonald said "the nicht" was too "dour" for him to go home. He and Stephen played chess, and the Master watched them. The sun rose gloriously this morning, but drifted immediately into banks of clouds. I lighted Harry down the hills at 6, and throughout the mountains was that hushed expectancy of snow. The brook is rimmed with ice, and the berries of the swamp glow with a deeper red against the leaden sky. I look out to Breakfast Rock, and a crow sits there taking a bit of refreshment. I know not what, but imagine it something suited to his taste, for he seems content with himself and all the world. Mrs. McDonald goes about her work quietly. I can hardly believe it the same woman that convulsed us with laughter last night in her reading of that delicious satire from Burns, "Death and Dr. Hornbook." She is a rare actress. Just now a cloud of milkweed seeds drifts past the library on their silvery-down wings, and a flock of sparrows comes to tell the Master the hunger of their hearts.

LIV.

December 9, 1899.

I met the Indian mother this morning, Wallie, at the French and Indian Cave under Bluet Ridge. She had been to the graves of her people, and

Original by John DeCamp.

Cardinal Brook.

the Abbot had said Mass on the old stone Altar. I looked in, by her permission, and the two lights still burned and the Crucifix showed the mystery of Calvary. It was warm at the entrance to the cave: the grass green and soft: the rocks hidden by the tangle of vines—a net-work of swollen buds in expectation of Spring, "Like the Dust within," said the old mother. Violets blossomed in the shelter, and she gave me some to take with me. I told the Master, and he said he would take me to call on her. We went right after lunch to her cabin, hidden in a cleft of rocks, and Cardinal Brook running close to her door. Her name is Convallaria because it was thick with lilies of the valley all around the cabin when she was born. Her windows were full of crocuses, and a spinning-wheel showed that her own hands had made all the linen drapery around. A white duck waddled round and jabbered and shook her head against her mistress' skirts, so glad she had come home. The Master led the way into the cabin, and the two aged souls confronted each other. She stretched out her hands, and said: "Anne and Simeon of Jerusalem have met!" And it gave new force to that old Gospel Hymn. I left them with each other for an hour, and called for the Master on my way from a call on Mrs. Bruce. The old mother was glad, and promised to come and spend Sunday at Ageweight, the first visit for some months. About the Master's age—the veil worn unto a mist that hardly conceals the mystery of that vast Eternity! We are back at the

cabin now. Mrs. McDonald freshens up the coals, draws the curtains of the library, and leaves the Master to a little quiet before supper. I am in my corner in the dining-room, watching the lights on the hills. I have half an hour before Evensong. It is now 6 P. M. Am just in from service, and have brought Halle. Father Max had a five-minute talk on the Symbolism of The Revelation, and it was very beautiful. The Cross, the Tree of Life, blossoms in the whole Bible's prophecies.

LV.

DECEMBER 10, 1899.

It is the Second Sunday in Advent: the solemn season is hurrying on. The Master went to the first Mass at 7. Mrs. McDonald and I were at the three services. On the Master's return he walked to the brow of the mountain and lighted a fire of leaves as a signal to Harry to come and spend the day at the cabin. The soft, thin clouds of turquoise smoke made the bleak air seem warm. The lad answered the signal by waving a handkerchief, and came after the second service. Convallaria, too, came, as she promised. I noted in particular that the whiteness of that Throne has drifted upon her heavily. Her head is like snow. The Master and herself, looking with such indomitable faith unto the things which must be hereafter, make

that Life so intensely real. Mrs. McDonald has always waited on her like a queen, and to-day she captured the Scotch woman's heart by her admiration of a picture of Mary Stuart. The Abbot told a Persian legend in his sermon at 11. It is this: A man went at midnight to the house of one whom he knew well, and asked admission. "Who art thou?"

"It is thy friend." And the answer came:

"Depart and let another take thee in, for my house is not large enough for two." He came again when a year had passed, and said: "It is thyself." And then that other took him in and gave him all he asked. In his application of the story, the Abbot said that The Christ came in Man's Nature, saying: "It is Thyself," and the World has taken The Man of Sorrows unto its inmost heart.

It is warm as I write. There is a sweet scent of rain in the woods, and the red berries of the swamp so well defined in the white frosts of yesterday, are scarcely seen to-day. Some crows are on the lawn, discussing whether an ear of corn be theirs or the robin's. The red-breasts, though, seem content that the crows should have the grain to themselves.

6 P. M. Am just in from Evensong and Harry with me. He will stay until morning. We are watching the lights in the solemn dusk—the faithful going from service. The Master is reading Isaiah to Convallaria and Mrs. McDonald.

LVI.

DECEMBER 12, 1899.

I saw Atropos lurking in the Solstice again this morning, Wallie: but I saw, too, the barriers that cannot be passed, the year is on the turn. The vistas of the hills are so soft: no harshness anywhere. The south wind stirs among the woods with voices of Spring, and there are dashes of rain that bud all the trees with tremulous stars. It began shortly after daybreak. I sat at 5 and read Matins in my corner, a candle giving me light and companionship. The darkness pressed heavily against the pane, and presently there were lights on all the hills—men going to their work. I think of the June nights when all the gloom was a tropic warmth, and fireflies drifted 'neath their sails of passionless flame. The whistle of the train rises—it is 7 A. M. now, and I know that it is passing through the swamp where the Symplocarpus brotherhood wrapt in the cowls of many colours defy the frosts. A dear crow looks from his window in the hemlocks, his wise head on one side, and I think of that beautiful verse in The Psalms where the Father of all speaks, saying: "I know all the fowls upon the mountains." The coffee tells me it is breakfast-time, and Mrs. McDonald confirms the word. We have buckwheat cakes, and I see again the fields of three months ago all white and sweet and melodious with bees. Stephen comes in, bringing the mail; in time to take a seat at the table with us. Mrs. McDonald says,

"I ken weel ye can take a scrappet mair o' breakfast." It wears on toward noon and the storm increases. Darkness hovers over Ageweight. Madame says I need a "licht," and she touches the candle of my desk with inspirations from the hearth. The star of its flame clings faithfully to the wick, and promises not to cease its guidance until I shall have finished my work. The world's old heart has never lost its sentiment, for, though all kinds of lights have multiplied, the candle still keeps its place in the affections of men. Mrs. McDonald is reading "The Little Minister" to the Master, and he tells her there has not been a better book written in twenty years. Mrs. Bruce has just come: she is to take dinner with us and has brought a box of callas and carnations, sent by the schoolboys.

LVII.

December 13, 1899.

It cleared yesterday at sunset, Wallie, and this morning I went out early for a walk. It is more like April than December. I turned instinctively to the ledges of rock where soon the warm kisses of the sun will make the Spring blush with the fire of columbines. With the spiritual eyes I saw the low meadows white with acres of bloodroot, and the steeps hung with fragile bleeding hearts, in the air of mingled green and gold. Last night we sat long time in the moonlight, and it lay like great silver blos-

soms on the floor. The far-off hills under its influence seemed no more substantial than the clouds; and when I had gone to bed, the beams of light took their silver flutes and lured me into oblivion with their melodies. This morning, too, long before day-break, I stood at the windows, looking out where the last watch of the night had kindled its fires at the gates of the Orient. Night was preparing to flee unto the realms of shadow, and a few last stars stood at the fires of the east, shivering. All the brooks are filled again, and the hills resound with their songs, sweet voices that soothe and bless. I wish you were here. The Master sits in the porch looking toward Caltha Swamp, and dawdles over a well-known little book: "How to Know the Wild Flowers." I know the mention of the book will take you right back to Florida. I have just read him one of Lord's Lectures—Ignatius Loyola, and there was something of the giant ascetic's enthusiasm in it. It is nearly noon now. I went out after the reading, down into the valley for a couple of hours. I found that Harry was home, and I sat with him in his little study half an hour. "Othello" lay on his table, and he was just finishing "Hamlet." A vase of mignonette that Mrs. Monroe gave the lad was on his desk. The sunshine fell warm on a plate of Northern Spies, but the apples were not there after I left. Mrs. McDonald announces dinner. We have a steak, a dish of spinach and a baked Hubbard squash, one of a half dozen that Mrs. Gardener sent. A crow sits in the hemlock, and the lawn is full of robins so tame that they will

not move out of your way—the dear red-breasts! Letters from the boys say that the three will be home the 20th.

LVIII.

December 14, 1899.

A star broke from its moorings last night, Wallie, as I stood by the window, and it broke in splendours over Ageweight. There seemed a music in its very movements, and the night was lonelier, darker after it was gone. It is still like Spring here among the hills, and the brooks rush swiftly on their way, dashing foam on the rocks, and leaving a trail of sweet songs behind. The sun shines on the trunks of the trees, and the dome is upheld by their innumerable golden columns. The hemlocks are keeping their summer festival, and speak comfort to the trees that wait for Spring.

Only seven more sunsets to the Solstice, and then Atropos must lay aside the shears: the lost Light, like Persephone, will return. Mrs. McDonald has just been to the study to show me a pot of preserved shad-berry which Convallaria has just brought, and I know we will enjoy it just from sentiment if nothing more. How short a time ere the ledges will all be fringed again with its blossoms! And what unapproachable places they choose! Such a manifest protest against intrusion. They keep an aristocratic seclusion. I never see them without thinking of a company of Angels or the risen Dead. They

conquer the frosts, and yet their blossoms are as evanescent as the foam on the mountain torrent. I went and read Lord's "Cranmer" to the Abbot, and he was as impatient as myself. The lecturer is just to Cranmer's broad-mindedness and liberality of thought; but he makes him the founder of a sect, instead of the conservative leader that kept the continuity of the English Church. One cannot understand Cranmer without knowing the Prayer-book of 1549, through and through, and that Book Lord does not know. The old Creeds, the old Sacraments, the old Apostolic Ministry Cranmer insisted on, and was the master mind in the movement that kept Catholic verities intact. Mrs. Bruce walked with me to Monksrest, and when the hosts of morning-glories turned the purple searchlight of their eyes into her soul-depths, she said it was like facing the Day of Judgment. The Master sends his love. The Indian mother, too, sends her love. I stopped there to see the Crocuses in her windows coin gold, and to listen to the songs of Cardinal Brook as it dashed the mist of rainbows on her lawn.

LIX.

December 15, 1899.

It is a morning of grey and gold again, Wallie: dashes of clouds, and then great welterings of sunshine. The berries are so very red in the swamp, and the button-wood trees are so white against the sombre banks of clouds. The white

birches stand like groups of frightened ghosts. The Master walked last night to the brow of the mountain, and saw a far-off light in the valley which he knew to shine from the study of "Echoes from Mossy Glens." The young author was at work, and the light was spokesman for his fluent pen. There are grand chords and harmonies of song among the hills to-day, and I recall the words of that mighty soul-mover, the Poet-Prophet Isaiah, in his clarion invocation: "Break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest and every tree therein." There is no master passion of poetry like the poetry of that Old Book. In my reading to the Master this morning, the subject was "Henry of Navarre" in Lord's "Beacon Lights of History," the book of lectures that has entertained and instructed us of late. I don't agree with the author that the King renounced his faith for the throne of France. I think it was an act of far-sighted judgment and statesmanship. Not "expediency" at all, but a patriotism that sought the best for a country broken and impoverished by war. The unity of France and the lives of her people were dearer to Henry than the despicable feuds of Catholic and Huguenot. After the reading, the Master went down to the Indian mother's cabin, where he revelled in the Erythroniums with their glistening leaves of bronze and green. She went with him to the Monastery for prayers, and then he brought her home for the rest of the day. It is a pretty sight to see the wild things of the hills come about her, no more afraid than her own Cardinal Brook. She sits now by the hearth with "In Memoriam,"

her finger on the line, "The time draws near the Birth of Christ." I have been out for a walk, and have brought Stephen home to dine with us. As we came up on the porch, a whirl of last Summer's leaves in their shrouds swept past us, a voice from the realms of Death burdened with tidings of Life.

LX.

December 16, 1899.

Atropos has been forced to stay her hand, Wallie. There came a minute more of light with the sunset yesterday, and it wrenched the shears from the hand of the hateful fate, and hurled them far into the depths of the Solstice. The year is faced this way again, and back of it, all the fullness of bud and blossoming, the power and the splendour of Summer. The hills are hushed to-day; but the sunshine is full and strong. The frost and the ice are melting under its power. The Master has just come in from the green-house with long stalks of chrysanthema in his hands. They fill the study with the odours of frankincense. The sunshine of these short days has been captured by them and held vigourously on their golden disks. Stephen went yesterday right after dinner, for the Master told him to go and get Harry and come back to take supper and play chess and spend the night. The sun went down, the darkness came, the lights went up the mountain-side, and the Monastery bell rang for Evensong. I found Stephen

and Harry there, and we came back together. Stephen brought a box of mignonette to the Master and it filled the whole house. I sat a while in my corner, and the night came close to the window and looked at me with its sorrowful eyes. The leaves rustled, the wind moaned as if in remorse for all its past crimes, the bleak woods stretched out their arms and wailed for the lost Day. How different, though, all within the cabin! The warmth, the fire, the light, the fragrance, and the restful isolation gave us comfort and pleasure. I went out and stood a moment under the hemlocks, and the wind was like the music of falling snowflakes. We had such a cosey supper and our very seclusion was hospitality. The lad beat Stephen at chess, and the Master and I got so much interested in the game that we stopped our reading to watch it. Mrs. McDonald and the good Indian mother are down to the cabin of the latter. She wanted to feed her wild pets. She sees that I am looking, and waves a daffodil, and the dear blossoms seem to make all the harsh air soft. They have just reached the kitchen, and Mrs. McDonald has a letter from Philip.

LXI.

December 17, 1899.

It is the Third Sunday in Advent, and nearly noon. I am alone in the cabin. The Master and Mrs. McDonald are at Mass. I went to the first service. The sky is grey, the hills are

hushed, the sun makes its journey through clouds of snow. The hearth-fire burns in silence, a rich bed of coals. The old clock that kept Christmas 1799, ticks on in the same strength of youth, and there are spring faces and voices in the erythromiums and the violets that blossom into loveliness and fragrance in this calm retreat. How still it is here! A deep sleep holds the study, and in it there is an eloquence of rest. I see the phaeton on Bluet Ridge, the Master and Mrs. McDonald are coming home from Mass. I put aside my pen to welcome them. There is a new freshening up of the coals as they come in, and they have brought with them the freshness of the hills.

It is now 3 P. M. The Master is asleep. Mrs. Bruce and Mrs. McDonald are in the study. I am in my nook in the dining-room, and Halle Seton who took dinner with us sits with me. Dr. and Mrs. Ageweight called just as dinner was over, but had a bit of fruit-cake and a glass of cider. We talked of Philip, and his coming next week brightens his mother's face even now. Mrs. McDonald comes in just here, taps my shoulder and points to Bluet Ridge. Stephen is coming, "that "ne'er-do-weel," as she calls him, she is so fond of him. He has brought the loveliest long trailing vines of bitter-sweet, and the good mother will put them up over the windows for Christmas. Father Max talked at Evensong on the crowns, the palms, the songs, the white robes of Heaven. "What is there in all these," he asked, "to interest the strong, practical man in his contemplation of that other

Life?" They mean whiteness of character, and the triumph of Humanity through Christ, and the oneness of Man's Will with God's. I heard Mr. Monroe thanking him after service. Harry came home with me, and the blackness clung to us on the way, a weird personality in it, it was so heavy. As I close my note, a loose vine taps at the window, and I think of His words: "Behold! I stand at the door and knock."

LXII.

December 19, 1899.

Earth and sky are wrapped in grey this morning, Wallie, but the grey is worn unto shreds, and the gold beyond flashes through. The ledges of rock near the cabin drip with spring rain, and the mosses and the lichens are luminous with a rare beauty. A robin is busy about the ledge, but the wild cherries are all gone now, and he is a staunch advocate of temperance, or rather, total abstinence is his theme. If there were anything of an exhilarating nature at hand, I fear his abstinence would, like Rip Van Winkle's, be deferred until the next time. I think, as I look at the beautiful fellow, in how short a time the red of his breast will act on the columbines and start them into life. I was at the Monastery yesterday, and the boys were frolicking, leaping, dashing about like the brooks—and well they might. Examinations are all over, and they are going home for Christmas on the 21st. Mrs. McDonald gives them all a dinner in her kitchen

to-morrow night, and it will be a glad time, indeed. I met two of them near Monksrest, and, putting on a very serious manner, I told them I wanted them to make me a promise. They were awed and knew not what to say. Then I told them I wanted them to promise that they would not study *too* hard during the vacation. Then I went my way, but I heard the lads smiling still when I was half way home. We will have pleasant visits from the Abbot and dear Mrs. Bruce and Halle Seton during the two weeks. Jamie was on the hills with his axe the other day, and I heard its vigourous music in the clear, crisp air. This morning the Yule Log lies at the door, waiting for Christmas Eve. The same old fire-place that kept the great feast a hundred years ago: and as I look into the depths of coals, I think of the influences that have gone forth from this dear retreat to make the homes of Men more like the Home of Nazareth. Stephen is going to take the Master out for a drive, and the lad will stay for dinner on their return. He will enjoy the box of oranges that came to the Master last night from Mrs. Elliot, one of his friends in Florida.

LXIII.

December 21, 1899.

Mrs. Bruce came early to the cabin this morning, Wallie, and she and Mrs. McDonald and the old Indian mother went out into the woods

for evergreens. All the hills were sifted over with dust of pearls, and the frost lay white on the old roads, and all the trees were red with sunshine. It was health just to breathe the undefiled air, and to feel the crisp leaves break under foot. The boys were here last night for their dinner, the feast to which the Master had invited them, and the pleasure of it all still thrills our minds and hearts. Their fine, handsome faces and exuberant health, their capacity of strong character, their hidden power to go out and prove themselves world-movers: I thought of all these as they feasted with us, and trust that they may accomplish the work which the Father has enabled them to do. The Master took them into the library after dinner, and gave them gifts and his Christmas blessing. The woods rang with their shouts to-day at noon, as the stages drove from the Monastery, taking them to the station for their two weeks at home. It is hushed and quiet now, and the voices of the brooks are heard again, singing the melodies of Bethlehem. I walked to the Monastery late in the day, and the sunset lay on the trunks of the old walnuts—and I thought that the gift of Inspiration was pouring from their strong hearts in songs of praise to That Child. A robin sits inspecting the Yule Log, and I think how, in only a few hours now, it will glow like the robin's breast. He sings his dear, glad song. "Cheer up!" And timid mortals must have courage. God teaches men through the birds. The Abbot has just come over, and has brought a Poinsettia. Surely its colour is near of

kin to the Cardinal-flower that fired the swamps when July burned in strength. Memory whirls me back, and I stand again in the midst of the full splendour of Summer. How short the time, and how soon it will all come back again! Mrs. McDonald calls me just here, and I go into the kitchen to find Philip Ageweight, Herbert Gardener and Harry Phillips stretched in luxurious idleness, enjoying a mince-pie. I allowed myself to be persuaded to join them, so I close this note with one of the first odours of Christmas.

LXIV.

December 22, 1899.

I found a little piece of grass this morning, just below Convallaria's old cabin, that has kept the sweetness and the love of April all through the year. Cardinal Brook has been kind to it, and this frosty light has wrapt it in silvery mists that have caught visions of rainbows. I went as far as old Indian River, and the swift current of its songs hurried on to the ocean, to be caught up into glory, and to ride in the golden chariot of the clouds, and then to descend again with benedictions of rain unto the Earth which God has blessed. Spring continues, Wallie, and even the naked woods seem warm. The hands of December have quarried a golden mouth to add splendours unto the realm of the Great Here-

after; and the Solstice will soon lie dim in the distance, for every evening the tide of the sunset breaks further on the coasts of Night. The Master and Convallaria are down to Caltha Swamp for a walk: I see them as I write. They are sitting on the old lichened fence, the birches with their white stems thick around them, their buds swollen against the sky. The laurels, too, show the polish of their leaves in the sunshine, and the hemlocks, as the breeze stirs them, shimmer into emeralds. It is so beautiful down in that old swamp. In the study here, the fire has drawn round itself a purple robe of ashes and is at rest: the sunshine gives all the warmth we need, since the Gulf Stream of May runs through December. Mrs. McDonald sings as she goes about her work. Mrs. Bruce is with her, and both are very happy. They are talking about making "a Haggis," which, I imagine, is a kind of Scotch plum-pudding. The Abbot is in the green-house, bending over the Stephanotis. It is still full of blossoms. I never saw a finer one. Jamie is a good gardener. Harry is at the dining-room table, wrapping up the books which the Master intends for his boys. A something in the very air tells that the great Festival is near; and here among the hills, it lifts one so much nearer unto the skies than in the rush and the turmoil and the care of the world. Year after year, and, at last, there will be throughout the world—"One Great Vision of the Face of Christ."

LXV.

DECEMBER 24, 1899.

It is Christmas Eve, Wallie, and the 4th Sunday in Advent. I was up at 5 in the hush of the stars, and sat by the library hearth-fire and read Matins, a wax candle burning softly in a silver candle-stick on the desk. Mass was at 7, and the Master and Mrs. McDonald went in the close carriage, for it began to rain at day-break. I walked, to enjoy the song of the rain-drops. Mr. and Mrs. Clark and their son who are here for the Festival went at 11. It is now 2 P. M., and shows signs of clearing. The rain comes against the windows with fresh impetus at times, but there are rifts in the clouds, and I see a bit of blue. I have had a quiet day: reading the Old Book and the magazines and some studies in botany. Convallaria sits with me, reading her Prayer-book and watching the lawn, the grass of which is just as fresh as April, and a robin hops about there. Just think of that! Mrs. McDonald has just come in to see him and says she hopes he will hang up his stocking "the nicht." Ah, the clouds are driven, as I write: the west rolls great avalanches of sun-set through the hills, and the brooks roar with strong chords of song. There is promise of a glorious Christmas. I must put up my writing now, for Philip Ageweight and Harold Ander-son and Herbert Gardener and Harry Phillips are coming over Bluet Ridge for a call, and the station carriage has just brought the two

Kimball boys who were here Thanksgiving. Philip is to entertain them for the week, as the cabin is full. They will be here every day, though, and so will the other boys. The six of them are in the dining-room with Mrs. McDonald, and the house just trembles with the surge of their splendid youth and health. The Master says be sure and hang up your stocking.

Christmas Morning. A precious Christmas to you, Wallie. I wonder if you are up. It has just struck 5, and the sky is thick with stars—the surety of a glorious day. The Monastery bells are filling the hills with music—the first Mass will be at 6. Well, the Mass is over, and we are back again at the cabin. Last night after a little supper of toast and coffee and mince-pie, Mrs. McDonald drove that whole herd of boys out into the star-light, and they all went home with Philip to spend the night. They were all at Mass at 6, though, and looked as fresh as the morning. After the service, Mrs. McDonald clutched Stephen Monroe by the arm and thrust him into her surrey before he was well aware of it; and then turning to Philip, she said: "Bring your whole tribe to the cabin, and I will gie ye a cup of coffee before ye gang down the hills." And a glad half hour it was to us all. They all came back and we dined at 2, all of the Monastery, together with Mr. and Mrs. Monroe—sixteen in all, and the table was stretched to its full length. We had oysters on the half shell, and two roast turkeys, and a dish of partridges, and a ham boiled in scuppernong wine and stuck full of cloves. After that, a salad of

lettuce and tomatoes from the green-house; finishing with mince-pie, and then going into the library for coffee and nuts. On the table were three vases of Jacqueminot roses and white Bouvardias, and corners of the room were purple with violets. Our tree was lighted at 8, and every one present was made glad. I will leave it to the boys to tell you of their gifts. I kept my last Summer promise to Herbert Gardener, and gave him Thoreau's Journal. The rooms are full of cedar and pine and hemlock and their delicious fragrances. The Monastery Chapel, too, was thick with them, and the Altar blossomed with Marechal roses, and the lights with their soft splendours shone in worship of the Light of Light, who at this time took our nature upon Him and was made Man. The whole day has been glorious with Spring, and from time to time the meadow-larks have filled the air with their songs. I went out into the swamp with the boys after dinner, and we found the purple cowls of the symplocarpus started in the sunshine. They live in defiance of all that the Winter can do. There is a package on the tree that the Master says must hang there till you come. I know you will be glad to meet the boys. Good night.

LXVI.

December 26, 1899.

The Spring continues and December lingers on its throne of gold; looking with the year's dim eyes at the Star of Bethlehem: listening to

the In Excelsis Glorias of the Heavenly Host: rejoicing at the onward march of the nations up to the cattle-shed to find their God. The Days resplendent in vesture of gold, and their hearts throbbing with the old Christmas songs, are leading the year unto the realm of the Lost Yesterdays to yield crown and sceptre unto the New. The woods were all bronze and red as the floods of sunshine broke from the gates of the morning: every limb and every twig had a distinct personality of its own. Bluet Ridge shone like fields of white Azaleas as the morning fell on the frost: the rocks blossom with mosses and lichens: a streak of bright grass defines the brook in Caltha Swamp: and a robin stands on the dizzy heights, crying to the waiting columbines, "It's time!" It is Saint Stephen's Day, as you know. All the eight boys were at Mass at 10, and then Stephen took them all home to dine at his father's. Besides the eight, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Bruce, Mrs. McDonald, Dr. and Mrs. Ageweight and Mrs. Gardener were there. Halle Seton was in the city, or he would have been there. A white Camellia lay at every place, and Philip gave a centre-piece of Jacqueminot roses. We had a roast of beef, a dish of partridges, and a pair of ducks. The dessert was cranberry-pie and ice-cream. Then we all went up to Stephen's rooms for nuts and coffee, and after some Christmas music, "the smoke stacks," as Harry calls them, wandered about the lovely lawn and enjoyed a box of Havanas that Mr. Monroe had furnished for the occasion. We all returned to the house presently, and in the

presence of the ladies gave our young friend "The Temple Shakespeare," in crimson leather, 40 volumes. A birthday gift, and the dear fellow was entirely unprepared for it. He tried to speak, but an eloquent sob forbade, and we all cheered him. We have just returned to the cabin, and Harry is with me in the corner to watch the lights climb the hills. Stephen played the organ at Evensong at the Abbot's request, and Arthur Clark is reading the service now to the Master.

LXVII.

December 27, 1899.

Harold and Herbert came this morning and asked me to go out with them for a walk. We went down to Philip's, and spent an hour with him and the Kimball boys. On our way, we stopped at the cave under Bluet Ridge, the approach to which was so warm, so like coming Spring. The terraces were as green as May, and the Prinos berries held all the fire of September in their breasts. We heard a soft, sweet voice, and stood in the hush and listened. It was the Indian mother, Convallaria, in the smoky door of the cave, and she sang this Christmas song:

Hushed the hills. Deep the peace.
Shepherds rest. Slumbering fleece.
Coming in clouds, lo, the Hosts of the Lord
Shone in pale splendours of light on the sward,

Singing the Saviour's Birth.
Comfort, O stricken Earth!

Voiceless Star! Prophecy's Child!
Thine the tongues on the wild.
Waking the Sages the deserts to plod,
Leading them on to the Birth-place of God,
Lingering in lightning rays
Over the Infant of Days.

Christmas Morn! Songs we raise.
Blazing worlds crash with praise.
Open, ye windows of Heaven Above,
Break up, ye fountains of Infinite Love,
Pour down the second Flood,
Cleanse with the Precious Blood.

I took them down as she sang, and thought you might like to see them. Not far away, a lad was scratching wih a stick among the russet leaves under a knoll of butter-nut trees. The trunks stand so ashen against the hemlocks. I am sure they are as old as the century. The lad had been successful, and had half a barrel of nuts at least. Herbert said: "Let's go and chat with him, and ask him what he got in his stocking." We went, and the lad was three quarters better off when we left him. There is that unmistakable feeling again in the air, and that colour of ashes over the swamp that tells of snow. Not a sound, nor voice of bird on our walk, save that a friendly crow bade us good morning, and we were glad to get back to the cabin. We stopped a moment at Pulpit Rock and saw the New Jersey and New York train come in, and I waved a good morning to the en-

gineer, whom I know. Harold said it was the courtesy of the gold pen and the steam whistle. The cabin is warm, and the Master tells the boys that they must stay for dinner, and his word is a command. They told Mrs. McDonald, and she said: "It must be a michty trial for ye to stay." And then she drove us out of the kitchen.

LXVIII.

DECEMBER 28, 1899.

I walked this morning with Arthur, and as we were passing through Whippoorwill Glen a young man came up and wished us good morning. Then he said: "You don't remember me, Father?" I told him with regret that I did not remember him. "I am Will Thorne," he answered me. "You met me Michaelmas, five years ago, and told me you were sorry to see a boy of twelve smoking. I thought it over and stopped it, and have not smoked since." I was glad, indeed; gave him the blessing of holy Church, and told him The Christ would keep him in his young manhood's strength. A kind word can accomplish so much good.

I sat before a glorious hearth-fire here in the study last night, Wallie, and read some of the quaint old stories of Christmas. One in particular pleased me: "The Fourth Wise Man," it is called. The Three had waited for him at the place appointed, but he had been delayed, waiting on the sick. He followed, but did not overtake them, nor did he find That Child. Jeru-

salem, Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth—he searched in vain. He found not the New-born King. For thirty years he searched, and finally found Him on His triumphal progress to Calvary. He waited until the Day of Pentecost was come, confessed Him, and, at last, died for Him. The legend reads that when he reached Bethlehem, the Holy Family had just left for Egypt. While inquiring at a house, the shrieks of mothers were heard on the streets; they wept their murdered children. Herod's soldiers had come. A mother with babe at breast, in the house where he inquired, appealed to him to save her child. The scholar went to the door, as the soldiers were rushing in, and taking a burning ruby from his breast, gave it to the Captain, saying: "There is no one here: disturb not my prayers and meditations." The child was saved, and in the next generation, was that First Martyr, Saint Stephen.

A thin lace of snow veils the hills to-day, and all is still. Even the brooks have hushed their songs. Convallaria is knitting moccasins, but Mrs. McDonald tells her she must put her work aside until after dinner. I smell a hot mince pie, and that means I must stop.

LXIX.

December 29, 1899.

Will Thorne, the lad of whom I told you, came to the cabin this morning at my request, and I gave him a Prayer-book. I told his story to

the Master and to Mrs. McDonald, and the good mother set before him a lunch of mince-pie and a cup of chocolate, and the Master gave him a five-dollar gold piece to add to his bank account—he has saved $100 these last two years. He is under an excellent man in a railroad office, and has time for recreation and study. He promises to be a worthy man.

This morning at 5, I stood at the window, and the moon, veiled in whiteness and wearing a girdle of thinnest gold, came through the gates of the east, and waved a farewell to the stars as they drifted out of sight. All was hushed, the calm that stamps the blue of Heaven on men's hearts. The woods looked so black against the kindling east, and the olive spires of the cedars were well defined against the approaching day. I went back to my fire and read Matins, and presently the sun mounted his throne and gave the benediction of another day's splendour of health. The green-houses just burn with Poinsettias and Bouvardias; and there are some fine Brandywine strawberries ripe, which we are to have for dessert on New Year's Day. The envious frosts and the winds rage to despoil the loveliness, seeking a crevice through which to enter the Eden of beauty, but seeking in vain. Last night there were visions far into the sunset, and all the mighty highways of light were strawed with palms for another year's triumphal progress. The way lay thick with star petals from the far-off Tree of Life, and only a few hours now, and the year that has done its work is

going back to Eternity with hosannas. Mr. and Mrs. Clark and Arthur have gone down to dine with the Ageweights, and I have Harry with me. He is busy with "Coriolanus," having just translated that period of Roman History. We are just in from a walk. There was a glow of life on the hills, and a low music in the woods. Crows on the distant fields of grain were holding a convention: the still pools of Caltha reflected the twigs and the lichens and the blue. I smelled the far-off coming back of Spring.

LXX.

JANUARY 1, 1900.

A good New Year to you, Wallie, from all here at the cabin. We have entered on the last year of the century. Last night the gates of the sunset were thrown wide apart, and in simple majesty the Old Year went to stand before the Judgment Seat. The clouds in vesture of gold attended: the hills wrapt in purple fixed their eyes upon the solemnity: the Evening Star filled all the west with its personality of light: a thrill of promise went through the woods, for the buds and the blossoms within their breasts leaped for joy. It was not like a pageant that would be seen no more forever. This morning the sun shines warm and soft, and all the hills are powdered with dust of pearl from the two inches of snow that fell with heaven's New Year's

greeting in the night. It lies like a golden fleece on the hemlocks, and the white birches are whiter, and on the avenues the crystals lie in untouched beauty: the brook, the mosses, the lichens, the drifts of leaves are all softened into loveliness by the lustrous gift from the skies. The hearth-fire burns dreamily, and the Master sits before it with the new magazines. Convallaria in the ingle is still busy with her moccasin knitting: Mrs. McDonald is singing Scotch songs in the kitchen as she prepares a turkey for the oven. All the boys have been in with Philip to pay their deference this morning, and Herbert Gardener is coming back at 1 P. M. with his buggy to take me home with him for dinner. He gave Mrs. McDonald Ian Maclaren's "Kate Carnegie" for Christmas, and read her selections from it during the day he spent here, and she says he reads the Scotch "maist beautifu." All the hill folk have come to the cabin this week to thank the Master for loving remembrances, and we have enjoyed their kindly visits. One o'clock came, Wallie, and Herbert came with it to take me to dine with him, as I said: but Mrs. McDonald and the Master both insisted that he must stay, and ask me home with him some other time. We were all pleased to have it so. Our guests leave to-morrow, all but Arthur Clark: he will spend the remainder of his vacation with us. The Monksrest green-house is still filled with morning-glories, and every blossom filled with the sapphire of the skies, with the message —"Lo, here is Heaven!"

LXXI.

January 2, 1900.

This second day of the New Year is glorious with sunshine, Wallie, and the winds fill the hills with great crash of song. A dust of snow whirls in the air from time to time, glistening in the light; and the trunks of the trees are all ruddy with warmth, notwithstanding the cold. One peak of the hills is so bright with sunshine, I cannot look on it, while all the mountains below are heavy with purple shadows. It looks like a golden tent spread there, and I think of The Transfiguration. We had a quiet New Year's dinner; Mr. and Mrs. Clark and their son, and Herbert Gardener were the guests. We had the strawberries, too, of which I told you—a full quart, and in colour like the coals of the hearth. After dinner, Herbert, Arthur and I went out into the swamp, and Arthur brought back a lot of Prinos berries for his mother to take with her. She is an enthusiastic botanist, and her boy is like her. He is like Harry in one of his characteristics—he does not talk. Jamie is in the city, so I went to Monksrest for the Master who sent a roast turkey to the old gardener there. The Master wanted him to come to the cabin and dine here, but he had sprained his foot and was sensitive about showing his lameness. Arthur and I sat in my favourite corner and saw the clouds, the trees, the rocky avenues and the outline of the mountains fade from sight. Then came the lan-

terns, and showed the vast nothingness instinct with life. We had a simple supper at 7: a bit of toast, smoked halibut and a glass of cider. The lad was out with me this morning, and, uncovering a bed of russet leaves at Cleft Rock, we found an Hepatica bud. Just think of that! Our guests left us at noon—Mr. and Mrs. Clark, but Arthur will spend his vacation here. Harry is coming to take him home for the night, and we will be just ourselves here at the cabin. I told Harry not to talk his guest to death, for I know how little conversation there will be. He smiled and showed me Irving's "Washington," and I know what the two will do. We have some yellow jessamine from Florida.

LXXII.

JANUARY 5, 1900.

There was a mist of splendours on the hills to-day, Wallie, and the morning sifted it through and through with dust of gold. Last night the far-off lighthouse glimmered long on our windows, and a search-light on the river shot a radiancy of palest silver through the mountains. It was in honour of the Master's birthday. All the boys and all his other friends sent flowers to him, and the cabin is smothered in carnations, roses, violets, Calla lilies and ferns. The mail brought a deskful of congratulations, and Harry came at noon from his office and brought a great packet of telegrams of the same character.

Just at dusk, Dr. and Mrs. Ageweight called, and brought Carlyle's "French Revolution" in three volumes, and they are royal books. What a stupendous writing it is! Well nigh an Apocalypse in its visions. Every page is hot with the lightning. And so epigrammatic, every sentence stands out in such strong relief. The judgment of the Bourbon Dynasty is come: the Nemesis of Retribution is taking vengeance at last, and we hear the sting and the hiss of that terrible scourge.

A bed of rubies glows on the hearth this morning, and the sunshine makes a tapestry of gold on the walls. Violets and jessamine blossoms and the first daffodils breathe their fragrances on the light; the air is soft and mild—the harshness has melted into Spring again. Jamie has raked up the leaves that the last wind strewed round, and they burn and quiver in brilliancy, wrapped in soft smoke on the walk below the south windows. A bonfire always has its own sweet smell and suggestions of the returning year and new life.

11 A. M. Arthur and I are just in from a walk. We found the gardener of Monksrest back of Warrior Rock examining a mighty pepperidge tree that he came on by chance one night last Summer, when he had lost his way on the mountains. It is a tree worth making a sacrifice to know. The Monastery boys are all alive this morning, I find on inquiry. They were all over last night, and the Master drove the whole herd into the kitchen, where Mrs. McDonald endangered their lives with fruitcake

and mince-pie. It is hard to kill ostriches. Convallaria is spending the day with Mrs. Monroe. Stephen took her over at 9.

LXXIII.

JANUARY 6, 1900.

The sunrise burned the east with leagues of gold this morning, Wallie, and all the trees, every shoot and swollen bud, were etched against the illumined sky. It is a fitting morning for The Epiphany, and all the glory of the heavens rolled through the woods and the avenues, as we returned from Mass. The Altar was white with a wealth of narcissus sent by Stephen and the other boys; there was a very wilderness of candles; and as the incense drifted upward, I thought it added a reality to the gifts of the Wise Men, as told in the Gospel for the Festival. I noticed many gold pieces in the alms-basin as it was carried up to the Altar—a custom of our people at this time, as you may know. On our way home, we heard the far-away train blow for Cowldeep, and I thought how beautiful all that stretch of road, as it curves round the entrance to Hemlock Valley. How it calms and soothes both mind and heart! Harry came home with us for breakfast, and Arthur went to spend the day with Stephen. They are congenial souls, and I have no doubt that they will have a twenty-five-mile tramp over the hills before we see them again. We have had

breakfast—it is 9 A. M. The Master sits before the hearth, and Convallaria is in the ingle with her moccasin knitting. He has just read to her the 60th chapter of Isaiah, in which the pine, the box and the fir tree glorify the Place of His Sanctuary. There is no place so appropriate as the hills for reading that chapter, so heavy with the fragrances of the winter woods. A fly buzzes on the window, and a robin on the outside looks on with rapt attention, thinking, probably, that it would be a dainty morsel for breakfast. The poor, silly fly buzzes on, heedless of the red-breast's designs; and we ourselves, are, at times, not much more wary. No sting in the air this morning, no feathery crystals of the frost on the branches of the trees, no raging of the wind. A dreamy light on the swamp tells that there will be rain. The old pepperidge tree stands against the grey a very Cyclops in its grandeur. Jamie is on the lawn picking up the twigs that the late winds scattered, and the grass is bright and fresh, notwithstanding the recent cold. We hope you will come to-morrow; the cosey chair awaits you.

LXXIV.

JANUARY 8, 1900.

Did you stand on the hill, on the way to your office this morning, Wallie, to see the sunrise? It spread over the black, grim mountain-side, a soft flush of light like the arbutus bloom; and

then it deepened into a russet bronze, like the colour of an October vintage. In its radiancy the barren woods and all the snow-strewn avenues were lost.

Yesterday the Monastery bells throbbed through the hills at the hour of Mass, and the cadences of the music quivered in every glen, as we went along. The whole day was like March; the hills were warm with the tremour of the heat, and a scent of Spring steamed up from the russet fields. The Abbot gave a thoughtful sermon at 11, on the Epiphanies of The Christ. He emphasized the Holy Childhood given in the Gospel for the day—The First Sunday after The Epiphany, and then showed that the lowly Jesus began and ended His Ministry in His Father's House, the Temple at Jerusalem. The Eternal Omniscience sat at the feet of this world's poor wisdom and asked questions. What infinite humility! And when the end came, that last week of His Life, He sat in the Temple and spoke that terrific 23rd chapter of S. Matthew's Gospel, hot with the lightnings of Eternity that scorched and shrivelled the sordid consciences of the priests and scholars that clamoured for His blood. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" The fearless, merciless denunciation of the wrath of God! They had spent their whole lives in God's service, and God Himself speaks—"hypocrites!" Right in the very midst of the mob that would drag Him to Calvary; but they lay no hand on Him, they never answered Him a word, they did not dare look Him in the face. And they crept

out into the night and hissed and whispered and plotted; and their God is crucified! There is no Hell worse than a Religion that has prostituted its divinity.

In the evening after Vespers, the Abbot came over with a number of his boys, and enjoyed our Florida oranges. It was Arthur's last day, and the boys were having a final word with him. He left this morning at 9, and Stephen drove him to the station. They had that twenty-five-mile walk that I told you of, and brought back a store of health and strength that will last all Winter.

LXXV.

JANUARY 10, 1900.

The sunrise gilded all the dome this morning, Wallie; but now it is all frescoed with clouds that tell of snow. There may yet be use for the "scarlet runners," though Mrs. McDonald says: "I hae my doubts." It is another of those days of deep hush: not a breath of wind on the hills, not a twig stirs, not a note from all the bird life. I put my ear close down and heard the voice of Cardinal Brook beneath the ice, and that is all the music the hills can give today. Old January has a tender heart, and will not lure the erythroniums from their retreats until the days of frost be past. The swamp that glowed so long with Prinos berries looks desolate now, the frost blackened them and they have fallen. There is comfort back of it all,

though, for the lengthening days assure us that in six weeks more there will be hepaticas in the sunny nooks on the south side. Yesterday I found a dandelion in blossom close to the green-house doors, and April will not give a finer one. The hush of the day is broken now, a soft, sweet rain is falling. The drops hang in silvery shinings from the trees, and its music strikes the window panes. I know it must spread radiance on the hemlocks of the valley that you love so well. Convallaria is in her ingle, and the Master is reading by the south windows. He holds a volume of Longfellow open at that celebrated poem—"Haunted Houses." I have read it myself scores of times, and always with the same interest. Only that calm, beautiful, spiritual life could have written it. I never sit alone without realizing that all the departed loved ones are near, just as the mystery and the joy of the poem pourtray. Such a poem as that gains in reality from such an environment as this. Jamie has just brought in the mail, and Mrs. McDonald is reading a letter from our dear Arthur. The Master has a box of bronze cypripediums from Mrs. Clark, the lad's mother, that came by express. I wish you could see the sweet look on the old scholar's face. Stephen has come in and hands me an open letter from the student that begins: "Fellow Buck." They will become staunch friends. A kettle drowses into song on the crane, and the air of the cabin is sleepy. We must go out.

LXXVI.

January 11, 1900.

The noon of yesterday mounted the heavens, Wallie, and dipped its pen into the fires of day, and wrote its record on the earth in gold. How great the change from what its morning promised! And this morning, too, heaven spared not the gold: the whole vision before mine eyes is filled with it, every twig and branch and lichened bough burns with it in the frosty light. I watched the electric stars burn out that keep sentinel, night after night, at the base of the mountains, where the orchestra of the owls tune their quivering voices, and the light was hardly gone ere the whole grim stretch of hills was irradiated with the colour of peach blossoms that deepened into the rich velvety fire of June roses. I stood at Pulpit Rock, and heard the whistle of the train at Cowldeep—that treasured isolation. The world's traffic rushes through, but the repose, the calm is not broken. The flowers come and go, and only the real worshippers of the woods know it—the great throng of passers by speeds on with no thought of its loss! Would that they could know that here is rest and solace and health for worn brain and heart! But for so many it comes not until the remorseless Fate cuts the thread of life and all is done. The library is full of sunshine, and we are taking a bath in dust of gold. The Master sits with a little volume of Longfellow's Poems in his hand, and the very title shows

that the writer was a poet—"In the Harbour." How beautiful! The long voyage of four-score years is finished, and home is reached—that Home. The poems written at 80 are not like those written at 40: sunset cannot be like noontide, nor Winter like Summer—the strength and the majesty are gone, but, oh, the infinite loveliness and beauty! Convallaria has just been telling Mrs. McDonald how she kept January 11, 1800. It was her mother's birthday, and there was a quilting party in that same little cabin by Cardinal Brook. How long ago it seems! And yet the brook has not grown a day older in all that time! I do not wonder that The Scriptures tell of "the waters of Life." The map of the hills that you sent delights the Master, and he sits with it in his hand just now, having put "In the Harbour" among the books again. He wishes that you would paint the red oaks for him, that foliage of fire.

LXXVII.

JANUARY 12, 1900.

The hills are all shut in to-day, Wallie. The mists were so heavy at 5 this morning that I could not see the lights go down the mountains. The rain, though, seems tired out and about to cease: the clouds are worn unto the thinnest gossamer. I never use the word *gossamer,* without thinking of its supposed derivation—*God's* Mother, and, how the dewy webs of lace that lie on the fields of summer are threads of the grave-

clothes that fell from S. Mary as she rose and drifted upward into the light. There are flashes from time to time, as though the light would break through. The walks all through the hills are coated with ice, and we have not as yet ventured out of doors. The hearth-fire is ruddy on the walls, and lightens our faces with the sunshine of the million ages gone: the Past is brought back, and gives the present hour gladness and warmth and the splendours of day. I hope your valley interests you this morning: the rain is coining silver pieces that flash from the apple-trees and the oaks with prophecy of tassels and blossoms, and I know that they must warm your old friends the hemlocks into many fragrances. Mrs. McDonald took down the Christmas evergreens last night, and it makes us seem a bit nearer Spring. The songs that broke over Bethlehem, the Star that poured its splendours over the Manger Throne, the Wise Men traversing the desert to find The Eternal Omniscience, the Epiphany with its inundations of light—these yield to the pre-Lenten twilight. Calvary shows afar through the shadows: the great Niagara crash of song dies into silence, and we hear the nailings and the hammerings of the men who are getting ready the Cross for their God!

A crow peers out from our old hemlock, and looks very weather wise. He seems to say that the day will fill the hills with shinings before the Angelus ring in the noon. The Abbot and Mrs. Bruce were over last night, and as it was very icy, Jamie got out "the scarlet runners" and took them home, so that he could say he had

used the sleigh once during the Winter. The bells sounded very sweet through the hills, and on his return, he drove the Master and Mrs. McDonald out to call on the Monroes. Convallaria has a bluet in blossom among the ferns.

LXXVIII.

JANUARY 13, 1900.

The bloom of roses lightens all the hills again this morning, Wallie; the ruddy light flushes every tree and twig and lichened rock and field of grass that waits for Spring. There is at this season a beauty in the light that the later year does not know; it is like that "clear as crystal" told of in The Revelation. A soft steam lies on Cardinal Brook, and the moss is tender in its childhood, and the grass that fringes the margin of the stream has the restful green that has never known the burden and the heat of the year. It seems to me that we all turn to the Spring—its freshness, buds, blossoms, vigour and loveliness—because its teaching is that we, too, shall come again unto the Spring-time of our wasted lives. We want the old spring in our step, the old strength; we want to get rid of the rheumatisms and the failing sight and the million wrinkles; we want to shift the weight of years. Ah, me! the grave is the only friend that can lift the burden from our weary shoulders. As we journey onward and down unto the Solstice of the 70th Winter where Atropos waits with the gluttonous shears, we ask if we shall

turn again unto the light: and a voice speaks to us from the fragrant prophecies of Spring-time, saying that the bosom of the Earth shall nevermore be scarred by another grave. The healing of the Light of Light shall work upon us the miracle of youth and health and strength and the glory of a manhood that shall never waste. There is but one season in Heaven, and it is Spring. In every wind-swayed petal and stamen of the blood-root God's voice speaks, saying: "There is no death in the realm of that vast To-morrow."

I was up early to have a talk with the stars, and to watch the lanterns go down the hills. They were like winged daffodils. At dawn I walked to Pulpit Rock to see the valley still heavy with the purple night, while all the hills were quivering with the strong tides of the springing day. Puffs of steam went up from mills and factories, whistles startled the world's children from sleep to work, labour entered upon the course of its exhaustless energies: and the hills, light-kindled, grand, unchanging, calm in majesty, sent down Benedictions to bless the sons of God in their toil till the night comes again with the stars.

LXXIX.

JANUARY 15, 1900.

The day lies in its swaddling clothes, Wallie, and the hills all drenched with light are paying the Epiphany of their worship. The

snow-clouds have strewn their blossoms everywhere—fences, trees, the woods, the brook, the distant hills are all luminous with whiteness and wrapt in silence. There are rabbit tracks all through it—I trust the hunters will not find them. Old January wears the ermine of his reign: but a beauty like the April shad-bloom fills his throne, and the fragrances of Spring are in the air. Yesterday was a quiet day. We went to the early Mass, and spent the rest of the day in quietness, while the snowflakes, like great clusters of anemones drifted round us as noiselessly as ghosts. Gregory Livingstone came in after the late service, and brought the Master a bunch of sumach and lindera from his favourite haunt—the Hemlock Valley. He dined with us, and then spent a couple of hours with Gray's Botany, studying the hickories and the oaks. A deep-red oak leaf, a lovely wine colour in the sunlight, lies on my desk this morning—and I rest my pen to hear its history: How it broke from its wintry bud at the first songs of the bluebird; how the grand tree hung with fringe of blossoms, and the bees gathered gold-dust and sweetness as they drowsed their mellifluent music; how it looked down from the parent bough upon acres of Calthas and bloodroots and bluets; how it was perfected in strength by Summer suns and dews and rains: How the Autumn came and scattered rainbows over the forests: and, how, at last, at the bidding of a voice—"Fear not," it kissed the tree goodby and fell to the earth, resplendent even in its death. And what of ourselves? Well, there

are hundreds of distorted sermons hidden away in the dust of libraries, and, thank God, they will never again see the light—these sermons teach that we are to be damned, all but the few; but that stupendous, glorious, eagle-visioned John who had lived a hundred years in Christ, he puts down the pen that wrote The Revelation, but he has told mankind that *multitudes* that cannot be *numbered* are there in Heaven! And what does Heaven mean, but that all men are perfected in God through Jesus Christ?

LXXX.

January 17, 1900.

March is still visiting with January, Wallie, and the lad's ruddy vigourous youth gladdens the old man's heart with Spring. The stars have drifted out of sight, night has gone into the shadows beyond the hemlocks, the frost is softening into the quivering radiancy of the dew, the purple mist on the hills is transfused with the light of daffodils—it is day. The sunshine, returning from the Solstice, writes on the illumined woods that the reign of Winter is nearly finished. Wheels and whistles and roar and crash of work, clouds of steam, the thunder of trains on the highways of steel, the pillars of smoke, the voices of men—all these tell the world's unrest; but here on the hills God's voice speaks, saying: "The mountains shall bring peace." Who has not gone to work this

morning more satisfied for having seen a blade of grass? What forgetfulness of the world's cares and worries in seeing some friendly crow in the thick evergreens? The beauty and the loveliness of Nature have so much power to lift men up to higher heights of life, where "the mountains shall bring peace."

10 A. M. Harry and I are just in from a walk. He came at 9, and will stay for dinner. We went and took a look at the old Indian River where he will catch a dinner or more of suckers in the Spring. At Cleft Rock, we found a maiden-hair spleenwort, and on Bluet Ridge a woodsia fern, as fresh as in the Spring or nearly so. The leaves on all the silent avenues were moist and soft and rich in colour—purple and violet and lavender and ashes of rose and wine-coloured russets. It will do me good all day. The Master is out for a walk, and Convallaria with him. Mrs. McDonald is dusting in the library. Jamie is opening the violet frames, and Mully looks on: she would like to smell them. There is a wistful expression in her eyes, and I know she could solve the root question of many a problem in botany. Out toward the south, Cardinal Brook flashes in the sunshine and trails a cord of sapphire down the glen, as it sings to the blossoming mosses and lichens. It would rest you to hear and see. Mrs. Bruce is coming over Bluet Ridge at this moment, bringing a box of snow-drops that blossomed in her windows.

LXXXI.

JANUARY 18, 1900.

I was down in Caltha Swamp at 5 this morning, Wallie, and saw the stars in their silvery barges drift out of sight. The moon lay white upon the hills, and presently the sunrise burned the library windows with orange fire. I took a stick and wrote on a frosty rail, as I sat wrapped in my cloak, and a crow looked down to see what I had written. It was just here that I found a violet in the moss last November, two days before Thanksgiving, and he thought, probably, that I was looking for another. I am much in love with the crow. His presence takes the sting out of the Winter, and speaks continually of promise. There is such a beautiful touch of every day life in the dear Christ's reference to him in The Sermon on the Mount. Close at the water's edge a last year's leaf rested, still soft and lovely in its ashes of rose, and on its withered bosom a fresh bright blade of grass that will avenge its death and wrest the whole realm of Nature from the frost. We have Summer days all the year through, and this month we have had many of them. The wild fever and delirium of Winter subsides at times and Nature returns unto consciousness and the Summer mind. Mrs. May went through the swamp as I sat there, and the dear old lady and I had a pleasant morning word. She told me that her husband has not been well of late. I have great respect for the old man and soldier, for, though he was

out the whole four years of the Civil War, he will not ask a pension for his old age. "I can get on, and not ask help of my country," he says. It is an aristocratic pride and a splendid patriotism. Living among the hills has endowed him with greatness of mind and heart. A sound of footsteps here broke my meditations, and the Abbot came upon my sight, taking a breakfast walk. A dozen of the boys were with him, and all the flush of the east in their faces. They walked with me to the cabin to pay their deference to the Master. As I sit at my desk the thunder of the world's work breaks against the hills, but they heed it not. Stability where all is change: calm where all is turmoil: Majestic in the midst of all time's fret and littleness. And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying: "Come up hither, and and I will show thee the things which must be Hereafter."

LXXXII.

JANUARY 19, 1900.

I went home with Stephen for an hour yesterday evening, Wallie, and a tame goose came to meet us. I talked with her a moment, and she took occasion to remonstrate that mankind has always seen fit to regard her as deficient in intellect. She quoted the proverb: "As silly as a goose." Then she asked: "Did not Sir Walter Scott write the Waverley Novels with a goose-quill: and is not the whole world of scholars agreed that the books in question show

the richest gifts of mind?" I told her fair gooseship that it would be righted in the Golden Age, and she went her way satisfied. The hills are hidden by mists this morning as warm as the last of March, and all the snow is gone. January has lost his ermine; but young March is with him still, and the wholesome lad's breath is sweet with coming flowers. The fire burns dreamily and has no need to keep vigil against the frost—he is gone. When last I saw him, his vesture was radiant with crystals, and he stood at the green-house windows, imploring a tender erythronium to open unto him: but the innocent blossom swayed him a negative, for the Passion vine had taught it to beware. Just here Mrs. McDonald called us to breakfast. The table was lighted with candles that burned softly in those massive silver candle-sticks among violets and ferns. The old clock ticked the solemnities that are wasting time away, and the grate glowed with the fire of ages when man was not. The coffee filled the cabin with its luxurious aroma, and, as we sipped it, the Master read to us from the Life of Millais, which the Abbot sent to him, and it has given us much pleasure these two grey days. What a wholesome vigour guided his brush! How his strong health and manhood showed in his colours! How true to Nature every landscape and face and history! The moors widened his artistic horizon, and his genius was never betrayed into a weak idealism. The mist clings to the hills, but it seems as if the heavy sunlight must break through by noon. The train has just blown a salutation to the pur-

ple Spathyema at Cowldeep, and a clock in the valley tells the hour. I am writing on a corner of the kitchen table, and talking to Mrs. McDonald and Stephen. She has just served him a glass of cider and brought out a mince-pie. I must join him after finishing my note. We hope you will come S. Agnes' Day, Sunday.

LXXXIII.

JANUARY 20, 1900.

It is S. Agnes' Eve, Wallie, and, true to his word, Stephen Monroe came to the cabin at 10 this morning, with their close carriage, and we all went to his father's for the day, as they had arranged. I am writing this in Mrs. Monroe's dining-room, and a festal hearth-fire roars gloriously, filling the room and our hearts with its glow. Philip Ageweight, Harold Anderson, Herbert Gardener and Harry Phillips are here, and I have just read to Mrs. Monroe and them Keats' "S. Agnes' Eve." I read from a sumptuous volume that Philip gave me Christmas, and then I handed him the book, and he read, with deep feeling, that master-piece—"Ode to a Nightingale." The Kimball boys wanted to come, but could not leave school; they sent, to represent them, 10 pounds of delicious chocolates, and we will do them justice—the boys and the chocolates, too. Harry calls the other boys "The Big Four." They will not be home again until Easter. Philip will graduate in Medicine in June, Herbert in Civil Engineering,

and Harold is studying for a Priest, as you know. The rain pours down steadily, and from the windows nothing can be seen but the old well-sweep on the lawn, for the white mists shut us in. Our drive through the hills was interesting, despite the storm. Cardinal Brook had strong music in its voice, and all the trees stood like columns of black marble. It rained hard all the way, but Mrs. McDonald called it "a mist," true to her Scotch bringing-up. The party from the Monastery has just come—12 o'clock. The stage is at the door, and the boys are in high glee—some ten or fifteen, and the Abbot and Father Max with them. Harry and "The Big Four" have gone out to welcome them. It will be a pleasure to Philip to have Halle. Just hear the noise in the kitchen, as they take off their coats! The Abbot and Father Max, bless them, are deaf. And the dear lads! they will get the utmost pleasure out of the festival. Dinner was at 2, and twenty-nine were seated at the table. Mrs. Monroe has five young ladies with her, so we had loveliness as well as strength at the feast. We had two roast turkeys, and a roast of beef; and the richest golden-brown pumpkin-pie; and a salad of lettuce and tomatoes, of course: and some cider with just that delightful twang, something like the sting of a first frost. We had Florida oranges and Baldwin apples that had looked on many a sunset. There was a centre-piece of white lilacs and Cattleya orchids that hurried us three months into the future and thrilled us with the finest inspirations of Spring. We all wished for you,

but you will be at Ageweight to-morrow and that will make us all glad. Convallaria sits in the windows embowered by burning nasturtiums, and is knitting moccasins for "The Big Four." Harry has his already. It is not S. Agnes weather, by any means. The owl can't quote Keats today, but there will be many a day before the white lilacs blossom at Monksrest when he will be "a cold." We all left at 5, and stopped at the Monastery for Evensong, and I am hurrying this note so that you can find it on your desk at 7, when you go into your little library for a talk with your books. You will be free from the world's work and dust and noise for another week, and will find the rest that keeps life young and strong.

LXXXIV.

JANUARY 22, 1900.

I walked in the frosty light this morning, Wallie, in the garden and on the lawn, and heard the voices of crows far away. The distance softened their voices so that it was soothing to hear: and, oh, it was such an assurance of Spring! How they ignore the Winter! Yesterday, the Third Epiphany and S. Agnes' Day—the hills were filled with light. The sky was cloudless, and the far-off vistas clear as cystal. The woods crashed with the harmonies of the wind, and Cardinal Brook poured a stream of melted gold down the glen. We were glad that you came and took breakfast with us, and wish you could

have stayed all day. We all went back to the second Mass, and in the evening, the young folk from Forest Glen Farm came over and remained with us until sunset—the pleasure of the gathering on Saturday being in our hearts and on our lips. The young ladies said they would like to stay all the time, and the Abbot said he thought the Master would have to build a "Wo-monastery." Stephen and the other boys voted it a fine idea, and Halle Seton said he would be glad to furnish the brick. One of the young ladies tapped his sunny head, saying: "The first brick." Mrs. McDonald smiled, and, recalling some Scottish reminiscences, said: "It micht na be much of a head, but it would a sair loss to him." But Halle forgave her

This morning every thing is filled with the inspirations of the east, and up the slopes of grain the hemlocks and the naked oaks and the chestnuts are interlaced, with sharp contrasts of light and shade, green and grey, foliage and barren boughs, the vigour of life and the leafless sleep of the forests that wait for Spring. The Master was up at 5, talking with the stars. He says that it keeps the calm and health of Heaven with him all day. The train whistled at Cowldeep as usual, and the engineer waved a signal up the mountains to the Master, invoking a blessing on himself and on all others engaged to-day in the world's work. Philip has just driven up, bringing Halle, and they are going to take breakfast with us. "The Dr." does not have to go to his work till 10. Oh, such a flock of bluebirds just now, scattering heaven all round.

LXXXV.

JANUARY 28, 1900.

I was up at 5 this morning, and after a walk in the rich dusk came back to the cabin, to my old corner where I watched the lights go down the hills, the wandering daffodils. Then I read Wordsworth, and that sonnet in particular on The Virgin. That one line above all others: "Purer than foam on central ocean tossed," Harold Anderson says that the Abbot made him learn that sonnet when he was fourteen, and he has had a reverence for women that he could never have had without it.

I am alone in the library, and it is the hour of sunrise. The hills alone know that it is day, the valley has not yet felt the thrill. The moon drifts, the palest silver, on the seas of light; the night is gone unto the shadows, and only the dreamy stillness of the Earth tells where the hush reigned. The Master wrapped in his cloak is reading Matins in the dining-room window, a favourite seat of his when the sunlight flashes on the glen with its soft mosses and lichens and Cardinal Brook's music. All the paths of the mountains are white with frost, and it lies on the boughs of all the trees that look so thick with sap, as they stand outlined against the pearl and gold of heaven. The sun just at this moment is cutting its way through a block of black marble, and shows its full orb of fire. Day after day its heat increases, and all the frozen wastes around us will soon be a warm haze of bluet

stars. The sparrows are thick and noisy in an apple-tree on the lawn, and there is but a short while before the tree will be a pink cloud of blossoms. Up the valley come puffs of smoke, the ringing of bells, the blowing of whistles, and the sound of the many hammers of the men who have just gone to work. On my desk a bowl of nasturtiums burns like a sunny orb, and two spathyema—"hermits of the bogs," wrapped in their purple cowls tell that the Spring is near. The strength of the Winter is worn unto the thinnest shreds—if it can be called Winter when its sceptre has been twined with flowers. Mrs. McDonald glides quietly in and out of the dining-room, and the fragrance of the golden coffee tells me it is time to put up the gold pen.

LXXXVI.

JANUARY 24, 1900.

Stephen came to the cabin yesterday evening to introduce his cousin Will Delaroche, who is with him for a week. A young man his own age, an artist who is said to have done some excellent work. He has come out of the city to get an inspiration from the hills. While they were in the study, Mrs. McDonald came in from a walk, and gave us a delicious tomato salad from some fine tomatoes given her by the gardener at Monksrest. Mrs. Bruce was with her After an hour the young men asked me to go out with them, and we also went to Monksrest. We stopped a while at Cleft Rock to enjoy the

sunshine on the russet hillsides to the south, so rich in the moist air, and so bright by contrast with the black trunks of the walnuts and the oaks, and so soothing to the eyes and the nerves and the whole inner life. Nature has put upon the walls of that whole vast gallery such indelible and enduring frescoes of rich bronze red. The young man gazed upon the whole deep calm a long time, and then said: "I never before felt the meaning of the Peace of God which passeth all understanding." The gardener received us with great cordiality, and gave the artist a box of carnations and violets. From Monksrest we went to the cave under Bluet Ridge, and as we passed through the avenue of "The Ghosts of the Leaves," before I knew it, Stephen had lighted the thick beds of sweet fern to give us a breath of woodland incense. The smoke softened the air with its rich fragrance, and we came back steeped in it.

This morning a man was at the cabin who said that he found Whippoorwill Glen thick with bluebirds. It thrilled us. The east is like a bed of opals as I write; and deepening into crimson the morning drifts over the hills burning them all again with the splendours of God. Cardinal Brook all adown the ravine is lighted with golden torches, and the sumachs burn like a great spiritual hearth-fire. Stephen and Will Delaroche have just come in to pay their deference to the Master, and want me to go with them again to see the sunshine burn all that great stretch of russet oaks, and to get that health-giving scent of the woods.

LXXXVII.

JANUARY 25, 1900.

It is the Festival of S. Paul, Wallie, and lighted by the stars we went to Mass at 5. The light burned in solemnity of worship before the Presence of the Altar, and we knelt in the silence for ten minutes before the service began. The Altar was white with Callas and Narcissus blossoms, the gift of Will Delaroche. The Abbot gave a five-minute talk on the "thorn in S. Paul's flesh," and said it probably was his remorse over S. Stephen's death for which he was in great measure responsible.

We are shut in by heavy white mists this morning; but they are luminous with the hidden day which is about to break through and burn the world again with its Midas touch of gold. How hushed it is! There seems no world at all, but these few acres bounded by a rude-screen of swelling boughs and buds that separates Nature's sanctuary from the intrusion of everything profane. The whistle from the train in the valley at Cowldeep came labouring heavily through the air a short while ago, and the pearls that blossom from the eaves speak prophecies of rain. I trust, though, that the day will break through with healing in its beams. Convallaria sits talking with the Master, and knits moccasins as she talks. Stephen took her out for a drive yesterday evening, and the dear old mother found a jewel weed that had just broken the ground in the swamp on the south side. Ste-

phen and his cousin Will Delaroche have just come in, and are to stay for dinner. They have been down to call on Philip, and found him and Halle Seton playing chess. They put up the chess, and, ordering the carriage, the four of them went for a drive. After the drive, the young artist walked through the Hemlock Valley with Stephen, and sat on the bank near the lindens, the bank all red with partridge berries, and listened to the music of old Indian River—the æolian airs that soothe and bless. A company of sunbeams all in gold passed through, but the royal twilight warned them not to disturb the hush that has reigned there for centuries, and never felt the world's intrusion. We have a pair of ducks for dinner.

LXXXVIII.

JANUARY 26, 1900.

The morning is cold and the wind is strong among the hills, Wallie. There is no warmth and comfort except before the hearth. The fire seems to know that it has work to do, and the flames leap with vigour. The logs glow and snap, and the heat quivers in the air, taking out the sting of the frost. The hills have lost all the soft, dreamy light of the last week, and are so stern and grim and black. Harry was here last night, and I walked with him to the descent of the mountains at 6, after a fine breakfast of buckwheat-cakes. The wind was so metallic among the russet oaks: none of the weird, soft

music that we have stood so many times to hear, preferring it to all the concerts and the operas in the world. I would not go to the city to hear "The Messiah" as long as the hills give Him a grander worship. The clouds look chilled with snow, and there is no sunshine; it is well that we have such a wealth of Summer within doors. Mrs. McDonald came just here and invited the Master and myself into the kitchen for a lunch—a glass of milk and a plate of toast with herself and Mrs. Monroe who walked over for a morning chat. A thrill of Summer went through us as we entered: the kettle sang its untroubled song; the dogs lay stretched in a very luxury of sleep; and the ducks occupied a warm corner of the porch, jabbering their contentment. There are so many wholesome lessons taught us by the beasts and the birds. I would we were so satisfied, and could overcome our restless longings: that we could with our whole heart, turn to The Old Book's command—"Murmur not:" that with ready obedience we could turn to Him whom Anna of Jerusalem called the world's "Consolation." Stephen has just come, and we are going out to the greenhouses of Monksrest to look into the depths of Heaven which the morning-glories reveal, and to get some lichens from the rocks where you fell asleep one day last Summer, as I read to you, the soothings of my voice, of course. Just hear the wind! There is such vigour in it; such exhilaration: strong tides of sap will stir the old woods into life to-day. Ah, here comes the sun! We must be off. I'll send you a box of carnations.

LXXXIX.

JANUARY 27, 1900.

I saw the sun break from the bed of purple hills, Wallie, and all the clouds in golden chariots waited to hail his triumphal way. The first light on our own hills here at Ageweight was a flush of peach blossoms, and the clouds that drifted lovingly in the softening sky were as if inspired by Arbutus bloom. Even the plane trees that were so ghastly against the stormy hills of yesterday are radiant with light as warm as Spring. The wind is hushed into calm: the woods are at rest: the vigils of the hemlocks are not disturbed; the sparrows flit in the sunshine, rejoicing; the bluebirds have come out of their hiding places of yesterday, and their soft notes tell that they have forgiven Nature for the storm-travail and the pain. The plants in the windows are all translucent, and have a brilliancy like the grass that fringes the brooks of April. I wish you could have some of their freshness there in the dust of your work. The Master is in the windows reading the Matins for S. Chrysostom's Day, and an illuminated missal lies open by his side. I am more disposed to dwell on that old Greek Father's courage than his eloquence. He was not afraid to face that debauched Court of Constantinople with God's uncompromising—"Thou shalt not," like S. John Baptist. The Ten Commandments were not empty words with that old Chrysostom. And with his name I always associate Savonarola's.

They were very much alike—the same fiery eloquence, the same martyr piety and holiness. They had a harder lot, too, than S. Paul: he fought with beasts, but they with demons who had lost the power to do righteousness, but not the power to be hurt by denunciations as deadly as the stroke of the lightning. They wanted God's prophets to speak unto them "Smooth things" to "prophesy deceits." The prophets would not, and they suffered. Convallaria sits with folded hands, like Anna of Jerusalem, while the Master reads the lessons to her. We heard the train in the Hemlock Valley, and clouds of steam on silver wings enwrapt it, and then sped up the mountain heights and vanished out of sight. Gone, I suppose, to meet the coming rains. Mrs. McDonald is bringing in the coffee, and I must put aside my pen with this word of blessing.

XC.

JANUARY 29, 1900.

I was up at 5, Wallie, and read Matins while the star wastes were still purple with the mystery of night and the silence that sinks deep into the heart with peace. Then I watched the lanterns go down the hills—the quiet music of their drifting through the deep rich gloom and the hush. They must enjoy the cloisters of the silence. Everything is white with snow this morning. It lies on the trees, long stretches of ribbon on the naked boughs, and the hemlocks are bending with it. The woods look like the time

of blossoming dogwoods. Cardinal Brook is feathery with frost crystals, and the water is soft and smoky and black as night. The crows caw from afar, and an occasional bluebird softens the harsh air with a song. Harry came last night and stayed with us till 10 P. M. He and Stephen and Will Delaroche took supper with us and Stephen took him home with them for the night. He had to go down to the express this morning, so he drove the lad down in time for his office work. He has just come in, and says that he left the lad caressing a Greek Reader. He is a born student. Stephen brought us the mail, and Mrs. McDonald says he must stay and try "to worry down" a griddle of buckwheats. He did not have much "worrying," for the cakes were fine—as you know, and so was the peach syrup made from fruit that ripened at dear Monksrest. Afterward he took the Master out for a drive in the clear, crisp, life-giving air. Mrs. McDonald is talking to the ducks, and they are jabbering back with full-throated eloquence. The tame white one that likes you so much, says she would send you a letter if she could prevail on some goose of her acquaintance to furnish her with a quill for a pen. One of the dogs came just now and pressed his warm nostrils against the window with so much affection in his great, soft eyes. Jamie called him to a breakfast of bones, and he went with earnestness. So easily satisfied! I would we always were ourselves. Stephen is busy with "Brown Heath and Blue Bells," one of William Winter's books, sketches of Scot-

land. He writes with such beautiful charity. I think that 13th chapter of First Corinthians has become a part of his very heart-throbs. Will Delaroche has just come, and we are going to the Monastery.

XCI.

JANUARY 30, 1900.

A light like June roses burns all the east, Wallie: the fire of another day quivers through all the horizon. The woods are all feathery with frost crystals, and the hemlocks stand black amidst the leafless boughs on which the first sunbeams lie in streaks of gold. How still it is: and what exhilaration there is in the stinging air! I sit looking out where the Calthas will soon illumine the swamps. Convallaria sits in the ingle, and Halle Seton is reading to her about the martyred Saint and King, Charles I., it being the day of his execution. His should have been the cloister, not the throne. His foes say that he was not true to principle, and yet he died rather than renounce the old Government of the Church of God. It is said again that he had no regard for his word: I think rather that he was fickle and inconstant—not a willful disregard of truth. My sympathies have been with him ever since I was old enough to know.

The Master is out on Bluet Ridge, communing with the spirits of centuries of blossoms, and Mrs. McDonald is in the porch, feeding the jabbering ducks. The tame white one of which

I told you yesterday has the gift of a quill from her friend the goose, and I imagine she will write you now, some new theory of in-duck-tion. The morning, though so cold, is glorious, and works on me its miracle of health—the tide of life dashes with new vigour through vein and artery. The sun breaks into the study, touching my pen with its light, and hanging on the wall back of me, a golden curtain embroidered with buds and boughs and shimmering light, and the smoke clouds of far-off trains.

10 A. M. Am just in from a walk. I left soon after breakfast, and Halle walked with me as far as the school. I went down into the valley and rested a while under the warm ledges of rock, with the hills in their rugged, sombre strength all around. The persistent oak leaves seemed as thick as in Summer-time. My nerves were saturated with that draught of colour: soft pink and violet and russet and pomegranate-red, and the soft texture of the Cardinal-flower were all blended in the gorgeous pageant. I would I might send you a bit of the unchanging calm of the hills to hallow your work and to exalt you unto a fuller revelation of God. Here, verily, is the gate of Heaven.

XCII.

JANUARY 31, 1900.

Stephen brought us some fine tomatoes from his green-house, last night, Wallie, and we had a salad for dinner. He took Mrs. McDonald

and Convallaria out for a sleigh-ride, and they came back looking as fresh as Spring flowers. His cousin Will Delaroche was with him, and they dined with us. It was the artist's last night. He left this morning at 7, and is to spend six months in California. He brought the Master a sketch of the bronze-red oak leaves, and told him he will do it for him this coming Spring in oil. We all hope he will come back again, for we took him right to our hearts. The air is heavy to-day, and full of arrows that wound and sting. February, in the robes of her coronation and heralded by snowflakes is ready to take the throne which the old King gives up at midnight. The sun is gone into the wintry clouds, and there is no splendour from heaven to-day. Nature is weary beneath the drear wastes of snow: but it comforts us to know that there are but twenty-eight sunsets more between the ice barriers and a living world of shad-bloom and Hepaticas. Put your ear close to the frozen woods, and you can feel the throbbing of the Caltha stars that flush the waters of the swamp with gold. The dogs are playing on the lawn, and the ducks are jabbering about their undignified conduct. Jamie has just come in with the mail. We have a delightful letter from Arthur Clark, and Mrs. McDonald, one from a friend who is spending the Winter in Scotland. It was dated at Melrose. Convallaria is in her ingle, looking over some purple yarn: she is going to make the artist a pair of moccasins. How much she adds to the comfort of all with whom she meets! The Master is looking over

a work on the Orchids of New England, and has just shown me a lovely plate of the Calypso, an orchid that I have never seen. I think I will have to go and spend a Spring in the bogs of Maine, and look the dear primeval world in the face. He sends you a blessing and the calm of the hills to lure you from the dust of work to Ageweight. I am going now to read Wordsworth's "Excursion" to the Abbot for an hour.

XCIII.

FEBRUARY 1, 1900.

Last night, Wallie, "The owl for all his feathers was acold." We are having real S. Agnes weather at last, the very kind that Keats told of in his celebrated poem. This morning, there is a glorious sky without a cloud, and the red east thrills me with thoughts of Spring. Yesterday, though, the weather used the eaves and forged icicle daggers for the warfare against the days that will bring the Equinox. As I write, the gates of the Orient are thrown wide apart, and the Day comes with his attendant train—ten of whom are resplendent with warm gold, and fourteen clad in the deep purple royalty of night. The way of his progress is strewn with light, and the wind is blowing the trumpet of its loud hosannas. I wish you could see the hills at this moment: a soft texture of sunrise veils them, as if all the roses of all time were

burned unto ashes and spread over them. There is so much beauty and splendour that one forgets the mercury is at zero. If we have such a day to-morrow, the bear will come out and see his shadow, and then crawl back again into his den, and then for six weeks longer the Spring must wait. Last Sunday's papers had an article on the quaint and pretty stories connected with this time, and we all enjoyed them as much as if we had heard them for the first time in our lives. Harry has just come in, and his glow and dash and enthusiasm are a tonic to us. His coat was just radiant with frost crystals, and Mrs. McDonald tells him he ought to be ashamed to wear so many jewels. He will stay to breakfast, of course. The mountains last night were filled with sleighs and music, and Stephen came and took us over to his father's for an hour. We enjoyed some fine Indian River oranges, and Mrs. Monroe had a half dozen plants of the sacred lily of the Aztecs blossoming in a bowl of water. She got the bulbs some six weeks ago, and to-day they are a mass of rich velvety crimson flowers, and heavy with fragrance. She gave me a stalk, and I am going to send for some by the next mail. I smell the odour of buckwheat fields in bloom, and that means the griddle cakes are ready. I must put aside my pen. We will be busy to-day getting ready for Candle-Mass. Mr. and Mrs. Monroe are to dine with us on the Festival.

XCIV.

February 2, 1900.

It is the Festival of The Purification, Wallie, the sweetest and closest to the heart of all the Christian Year. It is a few minutes before the sun, and the library is aglow with candles, and the distant windows of the Monastery are lighted with their gold, and the Chapel was a wilderness of tapers at the 5 A. M. Mass, and all the chorister stars went in festal procession through all the deep purple aisles of the sanctuaries of Heaven to the honour and praise of That Child. The sun comes at this minute, with all the torches of its beams ablaze to the Glory of The Light of Light. The Master has just read the second chapter of S. Luke, and it brings back all that old time within the grasp of the Present. Stephen Monroe came home with us from Mass, and is to spend the day with Chapman's Botany, the scholar whom you and I knew personally. The sun is up over the trees now, and its brushes of gold have painted the library walls with daffodils, and the sumachs on the mantel burn like torches of rubies in the light. Stephen sits at the organ singing in glorious tenor, and the Master, with folded hands, sits listening, the Glory of the Vast Beyond lighting his dear face. He, too, waits. He will send by messenger a box of daffodils and snow-drops to your study, and they will greet you when you get home from work to-night. He told Stephen of a child whom he has sorrowed for a century, and then showed

him a poem that he wrote concerning his sorrow in the dim past. Stephen brought a copy of it, and sang it to: "Art Thou Weary, Art Thou Languid?" It was like a divine revelation to the Master. These are the words, but, oh! that you could have experienced the mystery of feeling that came over us as the boy sang:

Just an hour of Life's sweet morning,
Fragrance, gold and song:
This was all our Darling's portion,
Ours the wrong.

In his birth, the Summer Solstice
Had been past. The Year
Turned again toward the Winter,
Told his bier.

Years will pass and tears will strengthen,
But That Day shall be.
Home, That Home shall end the sorrow
No more Sea!

Glad then drift we to the Solstice—
Winter, Death, the Graves;
Atropos but shears the anguish
That enslaves.

That Wide Restfulness of Glory
Healing tears will stain:
Tears that arch the storm with splendours,
No more pain!

Let us live that we may meet him
After Life's brief span;
Worthy then to stand before Thee,
Son of Man.

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe will join Stephen this evening and dine with us, and there will be several other guests. It will not be like the Christmas gathering, though. The Master has just told us the legend of S. Simeon. I will send it to you: It had been revealed unto him that he would not die until the Coming of the Christ, and he had waited 200 years. The snows deepen, the pulse wastes unto zero, the plow-share of age furrows its million wrinkles—still he waits. He looks at every babe in its mother's arms, but finds not That Child. At last! Mary brings her Babe to present It before the Lord, and old Simeon holds It unto his breast. His arms enfold Eternity: the Babe is the Eternal God! It is nothing to all that throng The Temple. Only an humble Mother with her first-born: they have seen it a hundred times. But the eyes of Mary's Babe and the eyes of Simeon meet—O Man, it is thy God! And the wearied saint gives the world its Nunc Dimittis.

XCV.

February 5, 1900.

It was a wild nicht here on the hills, Wallie, and the morning, too, is wild. It is the last of the Winter, though, and we know that the time is

short. I have always had a tender place in my heart for February: it was the month of purification under the Roman Empire, the Christian Church keeps the exquisite festival of The Purification of S. Mary in this month, and the name itself—February—means *cleansing*. It is the hardest, severest of the year, to be sure; but the fringes of its garments brush the violets of March, and its snows are turned to blossoms by the shad-trees on the hills. I stood at 5.30 to see the lights go down the mountain. Lower and lower they sank into the blackness, and I thought of Dante's descent into Inferno. Last night we read John Lord's lecture on Dante, and it is the clearest, best thing I ever read on the Poet whose fame made Italy world-wide. I wish I could put it in the hands of every careful reader. It is long past sunrise now; but the sky is lost in clouds, the day is drenched with rain, the fields are sodden, the woods are scourged by the winds, the hills are deluge-broken. In the west, though, the light is breaking, and I know from the flash of old Convallaria's eyes that she longs to get out and hear the glad songs and rejoicings of the wild torrents. Cardinal Brook is just beside itself with joy, singing the old song. The stepping-stones that seemed so high when Harry and I were there last November are almost under water now; if the dear stream add to the volume of its strength, we will not be able to cross at night-fall. We all went over to the Monastery for supper last night, and it made the day seem bright being with all those young lives. After Mrs. Bruce's famous waffles I read to the lads

a story of thrilling experience in the Arctic cold, and they all sat spell-bound, as I myself when I first read it. Stephen has just come in with a box of those dear old-fashioned flowers, the hollyhocks, from their green-houses. The Master just hugged them to his breast, and then the boy, he was so glad. Mrs. McDonald tells him he will not get out alive until after dinner. Your daffodils still gladden our hearts, and are the only sunshine we have to-day. Their freshness lessens the weight of years.

XCVI.

February 8, 1900.

I was prowling around our old Caltha Swamp again yesterday, Wallie, and found the remains of an old fireplace belonging to an house that stood there some 150 years ago. It is well nigh in ruins now. I told the Master, and he gave me its history, telling of a certain Anderson, its builder. He was in the first Stuart Rebellion, 1715, and fled from Scotland to save his life. He found refuge here in this new land among the hills, and lived in calm and peace, undisturbed, and never molested of the Indians who then roamed the mountains. The cabin in which he, his wife and his three sons lived was called "Scotboards," and was known for hospitality and deeds of Christian love far and wide. The folk of the country-side always found welcome

in the sweet home, and the Indians were taught the Christ's Gospel and were baptized. I found there the record of the baptism of a babe, "Ogeechee," and Convallaria tells me that this Ogeechee—Wild Balm—belonged to her own tribe. I see in vision, and that beautiful, calm life all comes back again—the crane and the steaming kettle, the glow of the hearth-fire, the old well sweep, the old garden with its sunflowers and hollyhocks; and this life went on until 1775, when the master of the house and his wife were called to keep their Golden Wedding in the Golden Jerusalem on High. The sons had remained near their home for a time, and then had gone into the English army, and their lives swelled the army of martyrs whose heroism made this land what it is to-day. I find that the Monroes are descended from a daughter of one of these sons, and years ago an old Indian dying here on the mountains told the Master that he was baptized in this old house, whose occupants now for long time have been one family again in the Home above.

Some days ago Harry and a friend went among the hills with a camera, and to-day Harry has brought us pictures of old Indian River and Cleft Rock and the Monastery. They are perfect, and we have given them a place in the study. The lad stopped at Monksrest, and the gardener sent us a box of carnations and hyacinths.

XCVII.

FEBRUARY 9, 1900.

One winter's night a wanderer on the hills was arrested by a light shining from the chinks of a cabin. It was cold and a wild storm raged, and the snow fell with death in its voice. The wanderer hailed the light as his last hope—he was tired out. It was February, 1660, and the man was one who had sympathized with England's Regicides. I tell you the legends as they were told to me. He went to the window of the cabin and looked in, finding warmth and shelter. Then he knocked at the fast-closed door. The inmate of the cabin, an old Monk at his prayers, heard and answered, saying, "It may be He who said: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.'" The wanderer remained with the old priest there at Monksrest for twenty years, and, when he died, laid him to rest under the oak trees which he loved, while he himself lived on there still for nearly half a century. His door opened with wide charity for all, and here the weary, heavy-laden found the dear Christ's rest. One night a band of Indians cut and gashed his door with their tomahawks, clamoring for his life; but the old saint did not resist them. Standing in the white vesture of a Priest, he opened to them with a martyr's heroism. What did they do? They fell away in awe, and never an Indian troubled him more. There came a company of soldiers one day to slay him, because he had consented to the death of his King, but when

they looked on him that Old Voice spoke to their hearts: "Why persecutest thou me?" They fell at his feet and asked his blessing, and turned and left the old Saint to his prayers and charities and vigils. Aquilegia was with him when he died. The mother of the chieftain who had sought his life fifty years before, and she and her people stood by his grave under the oaks singing the "Dies Irae."

It is noon now and Harry has come to stay until to-morrow morning. He will revel in the books. Ever since his last visit a paper-cutter has marked Mary Stuart's escape from Loch-leven, as told in "The Abbot," one of an aristocratic set of Scott given to the Master by the boys of the school. I must stop. I smell the fried oysters, and that means that lunch is ready. The Master sends his blessing.

XCVIII.

February 10, 1900.

The whistles have just blown that set the sons of toil to work; through the valley the miracle of steam has left a train of clouds flushed with the coming sunrise, and I am at my desk in the cabin, proposing to tell you a story of Monks-rest in that old time of two centuries ago. The regicide sat in his door one August day, and all the valley quivered with purple heat. The shadows were soft on the grass all round his door; the hollyhocks spread the many colours of their beauty, and bees drowsed over a sunflower hedge

of gold. The tramp of many feet was heard, and a band of Indians appeared. They came into his cabin, lay their tomahawks on the table, saying: "We give them all up to the Chieftain Christ; make no more war; follow the Book you have read; live Christians." So much this one life had influenced the savage children of the forest to turn to the King of Calvary, and they kept their word. Cabins of sweet home life took the place of wigwams; their wives were elevated to Christian womanhood; the peace of God reigned on the hills. As long as the old Saint lived the red men, with wives and babes, thronged his simple abode and became more and more like unto Christ. See, here is a young warrior bringing in a venison, or an Indian mother a pot of wild honey, or a child a bunch of moccasin orchids. The Gospel is a living power here; this is the gate of Heaven, and here willing hearts and hands brought the stones for His house, and the church that we call "The Monastery" was built. Thus the years went on and the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, "I will draw all unto Myself."

Harry stayed all night, and I walked with him this morning to Brow-wait, as he went to his office. Philip was home for a day and came and dined with us last night. After dinner he told us of an interesting article which he read lately on consciousness. The theory of the writer seems to be that there is a two-fold consciousness. That of our waking hours is the lower, and is the reflex of that other and higher consciousness of which we have intimations dur-

ing sleep and in the delirium of fever. What we know as *unconsciousness* is a passing into a higher estate of consciousness, in which there is no dependence on corporeal conditions. It is something to ponder.

XCIX.

February 12, 1900.

I wish you could have seen the gold dust of light, Wallie, as the heralds of the day sprinkled it over the hills this morning, and all the woods blossomed with it like May. The crows filled the far-off trees with their—Yes, I shall call it *music,* for their voices had no harshness in them. I stood a while in the glory and listened to the raven prophecies of the coming Spring, and then went to my desk to take up the old work.

I talked yesterday evening with Stephen's great-grandmother, who is with them now, a woman more than 90. I sat in their library window among the nasturtiums, and the old lady told me of the sweet life in the Anderson cabin, and one Easter Eve in particular, the 14th of April, I pictured the scene as she talked. Mr. Anderson was at the plow turning the fresh sods for corn, and burning brush scented the air, and the crows followed fearlessly in the furrows, and the ancestry of the present shad-trees scattered round their fragile blossom-fringe of snow. In the house his good wife spun the snowy linen to the music of her wheel—the same old wheel

that the Monroes have in their garret now, and as I looked at the work of her hands—for Mrs. Monroe has a bit of the linen—I thought that its maker must be more enduring than her work; that woman still must live. In her garden that Easter Eve the shadows stretched long lines of purple sleep, and the daffodils made sunshine, the blackbirds and the bluebirds rejoiced together, and the mother's heart went out to her boys who had just come in loaded with caltha blossoms for the Altar on the morrow. They are all one unbroken family again—there, and the gold of "The Better Country" is still reflected in the blossoms that little hands still gather here on the earth below at Easter-tide for the altar throne of God and Christ.

It is noon now. I have been out into Century Swamp with Laurence Kent, the Rhode Islander who moved here a year ago. We went to see the tupelo tree that towers so gloriously above all other trees, and holds a superlative supremacy of grandeur. The air was warm and moist, and a three-mile stretch of oaks in their fire bronze held us under their influence for an hour.

C.

FEBRUARY 13, 1900.

One day the Regicide Priest was wandering among the hills, and found a fisherman with a basket of speckled trout by his side. The brook dashed on, singing its Easter carols; foam and spangles of sunshine drifted and flashed on the

water, and erythronium blossoms bordered the marge with their yellow stars; the trees were soft with the first brilliancy of foliage in the dreamy light, and the robins were busy with their house-building. The world was fresh and clean and washed of every stain, and men, too, were glad with the thrill of immortal youth. Our old friend went and joined himself to the fisherman, and took him to his cabin at Monksrest. There, after a broiled trout and a cup of wine from his own vintage on the hills, he read to him the miraculous draught of fishes that first Eastertide, as told by S. John. The fisherman listened, glad to find in the Bible things that appealed to the ruling motives of his life. He came back years afterward, one night when all the hills were thick with voices of the fallen leaves, and said: "I have watched your light shine on the blackness, and never without remembering how you read to me of the Star that guided men to The Christ, and I have come to tell you that I, too, am Christ's." And the next Spring, when the brook sang its Easter songs, the old Regicide Priest dipped the crystal waters of Baptism and signed his fisherman friend with the Holy Sign, while the wild-flowers shed their fragrances on the hallowed scene. Ever after the new disciple kept a light in his own cabin to guide wanderers to a night's lodging and to Christ. And when at last it failed, and the cabin was dark and bleak and chill, the man himself was gone to lay his strength of manhood at the feet of the Light of Light in the Father's House above. "And there is no night There."

I was out a little while ago—it is 11 A. M. now—and met a young man among the bronze-red oaks near Century or Hundred Acres Swamp. We talked together for a short time, and I found that he was hurrying to the maelstrom of the city. He was tired of the country and wanted "life." I wonder what the bluets think of him!

CI.

FEBRUARY 14, 1900.

It was a cold S. Valentine's on the hills; the wind shrieked; the snow was drifted to the windows of the Anderson cabin there in Caltha Swamp in that long ago, and the family sat in comfort before their hearth-fire, glad that they were not out in the storm, and with the prayer that no one else might be. There came a loud knocking at the door, and above the rage of the storm was heard the voice of an Indian woman with babe at breast. She went out and was overtaken by the snow, and could not find her way home. The Andersons took her in—for they themselves knew what it was to be wanderers from home—and kept her until Spring, for her young husband warrior was dead. The woman saw the living power of the Gospel, and she and her child were given to The Christ in Baptism. And not only that—she heard of a conspiracy to kill the family of her benefactors and burn their house; but when the hostile Indians came in the midnight for their work of destruction, she, all in white, rose up suddenly

before them in the porch, and they, awed by the sight, sped away into the forest, having seen a messenger from the Great Spirit. Then she went to them: "I stopped you; it was no spirit. Those people are the kindest friends red men could have. Go to them. Tell them what you have done, and be forgiven." They went, and there were no more savage deeds on the hills. Convallaria told me this as we sat yesterday in the sunset in the ruins of the Anderson cabin, and she pointed out to me the gashes of tomahawks on the door, made before the gentleness of the Gospel filled the red men's hearts.

I asked Laurence Kent what impression New York City had made on him in a recent visit. He answered me that he stood in Forty-second street where, he had been told, 100,000 persons pass every day; and he wondered how long it was since an Indian moccasin flower had blossomed there. How the trees and the blossoms will love him! The green-house is still ablaze with poinsettias, and a white lilac fills the study—cut yesterday in honour of the Abbot and some friends who dined there. Cardinal Brook is all gold this morning and full of Spring songs.

CII.

February 15, 1900.

You may have noted, Wallie, on Convallaria's breast that bit of embroidery of arrows and a bunch of rattles in purple and gold. Well, to-

day we walked to Caltha, and she told me that one of her ancestors, an Indian chieftain, sat in conversation with Mrs. Anderson when one of her lads came into the cabin with a rattle-snake coiled round his wrist. He had caught the reptile, not knowing its deadly power. The Indian, seeing the mother's fear, as quick as the lightning strung his bow and shot off the reptile's head. "It is a weapon of death, but it has saved my boy's life," cried the grateful mother, and it made her his staunch friend for life, while her boy followed him and became a marksman renowned through all the hills, neither snake nor wild animal having power to do him hurt. He could pick up any snake, and it had no sting; and the ferocious wolf whimpered at his feet.

The morning, after the example of the mother of Achilles, has dipped the day in gold, and it will be vulnerable only in the sunset. The woods are kindled with light, as if blossoming with all the glory of all the orchards that have given fragrances to the Springtime since the Earth was fitted for man's abiding-place and home. I walked to Pulpit Rock this morning to see the train pass Hemlock Valley, for Harry was on the train with Stephen, going to the city to spend the day among the bookstores. They waved to me as the train was passing the old yellow house. As I turned to go back I found the Rhode Islander on the grey rock, drenched in the glory. We walked together to catch a glimpse of our old Pepperidge as it towered in its grandeur, and then I took him home to breakfast. The Master lent him "The Trees of North-

Eastern America," Newhall. And there was that about the young man, as if the Day of Pentecost had filled him. How short the time now ere the anemones and the erythronia will irradiate the woods and the Winter-weary souls of men with their loveliness! And here a meadow-lark sings, while the crows are noisy in all the woods. I wish you could escape the noise, the dust, the din, the rush of work, and sit here a while and rest, and drink in health and new strength from the hills of God. The sun-beams on the roof to-day will bring you the old Scholar's Blessing.

CIII.

February 16, 1900.

Two men came to the Master this morning, Wallie, to have a quarrel settled. The spokesman said: "This man called me a jackass, and I wouldn't stand it, so I kicked him."

"And isn't kicking one of the characteristics of the jackass?" said the Master. The man scowled, and then his face softened; then he smiled, and the smile strenghtened into the heartiest laugh. It put both of the men in good humour: and then the Master, taking them both into the kitchen, asked Mrs. McDonald to give them a cup of coffee. And the way it turned out, they seemed not sorry to have quarreled. Yesterday the south wind flowed through the air in delicious waves, as soft as rose-leaves and as sweet as the songs of a linnet: but to-day the

blasts from the north have driven it all away, and I sit close to the hearth—it is Winter. The woods are strewn with ashen grey; and on the bleak avenues the ghosts of last Summer's flowers sobbed on their withered stalks. I found Harry out on the mountain for a basket of hickory chips, and I prevailed on him to come home with me for an hour. A robin came and talked with us as we sat in the study, and told us that all the robins of the South are on their way North again with the fires of Spring burning on their breasts. I saw visions of Arbutus on the mountain-sides, and daffodils here on the lawn, and strawberries lighting the June gardens with January coals. I told the lad he must go with me some April day for the Arbutus: he has never seen it. Here the robin flew down on Convallaria's shoulder, and nestled against her cheek. The old mother talked with him of other Summers, and I believe the sagacious bird knew. Mrs. McDonald said: "Well, I never saw sic a thing as that!" And I think Convallaria did not understand her very well, for she answered her, "Oh, no, Scotland," she always calls her "Scotland," "the bird is not sick at all." She understands birds, you see, better than Scotch. Stephen came along, and the Master made him put up his buggy and stay for dinner, and after dinner he drove Harry home. As I write, the beautiful white ducks make a long line on their way to Caltha Swamp, and the dogs are making a bed of russet leaves on the porch. The wind, though, gives them no peace.

CIV.

February 17, 1900.

Mr. and Mrs. Livingstone were at Evensong last night, and the boy, of course, was with them. When Father Max came into the Chancel, the little fellow recognized him, and, remembering the nursery rhymes that his uncle had been teaching him, he cried out with delight: "The old cow jumped over the Moon." For a moment we felt anything but the proper spirit of devotion, and even the Priest's face rippled into a smile. After service he told the sweet lad that the Bishop will be after him for innovations.

There is a promise this morning that February shall have jewels for her vesture, and the promise is made by the music of snowflakes that wander aimlessly over the hills and the forests. Ah, me! When one reaches the second arch of the century the snow is dreaded: it brings no thrill to the blood: the fire, the dash, the tireless enthusiasm of youth are gone. There are but eleven days more, though, and then the trumpet voice of March will swell the woods with—the Winter is past! Even now the heat quivers on the hillsides, or did yesterday; and the New Year is conscious of its strength. Harry tells me that he has heard a wood-pecker tapping in the woods, and he tried to take down the message that the feathered operator was sending, but could not. How that same stretch of woods was thick with robins last All Saints, their breasts and the leaves and the berries of

the dogwoods glowing with the same fire! The contrast makes the desolate hush of to-day cut deeper. As I write, a robin is making a dainty meal in the library window: shaking out a world of saucy petulant notes from his red breast as he feasts. He is scolding not us, but himself—Convallaria says, because he did not come before. I wonder, indeed, that he came so soon from the Jessamine Swamps and the acres of sunny lands steeped in the fragrances of violets. Convallaria had a letter from Herbert who said that he had seen a robin in that old grave-yard; and she believes he appeared first among the Dead, because the most stupendous miracle will be accomplished there in a Springtime that shall come, the last of Earth and the first of Heaven. The Abbot with a number of his boys has just called, on their way to the Monroes for a walk. And not the walk alone: I know the lads are thinking of nut-cake and golden pippins. So anxious to be men and to plunge into the maelstrom of Life's cares and responsibilities! But they can't get the lost youth back! Just hear that robin!

CV.

February 19, 1900.

The morning burns the hills again, Wallie: the world is full of whiteness and sunshine and the music of the wind, the streams and the brooks are all sealed, and the frost sits guard—it is Winter. The withered ghosts of last Summer's

flowers look as if there were no hope: but a meadow-lark fills the frosty air with the music of his grand courage. For all the snow and the frost and the howlings of the wind, there are but ten days more ere March sit upon his throne of daffodil gold. I appreciated Mrs. Bruce's sentiment as she stood with Mrs. McDonald in the kitchen yesterday evening, "God forgive the bear for lying." Stephen has been with us since Saturday noon. We all went to Mass yesterday in the large sleigh, and our hearts were warmed by the sweet Gospel of the sower that is so fragrant with Spring—the Gospel for Sexagesima. A bluebird flitted before us, the light of Heaven on his wings and the scent of Southern woods on his song. On the way back we met Harry, and I took him with me to the south side of the old mountains. It was warm and Spring-like there—20 degrees warmer, I am sure. We sat on the rocks under that old pine, and talked of the genial October days two years ago when we went all through the glen for frost grapes. I see it all to-day, all the red and the yellow of the woods: the air sown thick with the songs of the robins and the bluebirds: the witch hazel fringing the year's pall; and the dogwoods burning like the hearth-fires of hospitable kitchens. The last time the lad breakfasted here, I gave him some of that same grape jelly for his griddle-cakes. After dinner, Stephen filled the cabin and our hearts with his glorious tenor voice, and then the three of us went out to Caltha Swamp and poked in the ashes of the old Anderson hearth—the sumachs

near by glowing with the memories of the fires that burned there so long ago. How desolate! The old crane, the centuries of dust, the mouldering beams, the crumbling oven, the moss-grown well-sweep! But the family is one in the Great Hereafter, and death can put them asunder no more forever. The boys of the school were over last night, and the Master drove the whole herd into the kitchen, and good Mrs. McDonald had not even a cruller left when the lads went their way.

CVI.

February 20, 1900.

There is no discouragement among the birds, Wallie. I heard a crow just now, and his caw had all the old gladness. So, too, a meadow-lark—his song has softened the harshness of the air, and there are whisperings of Spring again. The sun fills the cabin, and the hearth glows, and the violets breathe out their fragrance. I look over the waiting hills, and where the snow now lies so white and crisp and cold, soon the words of Scripture will again prove their truth—"The time of the singing of birds is come." The sumachs are loaded with snow, but their panicles of berries redden the swamps with a glow that makes them seem warm. What enduring colours! The sun, the rain, the frosts, the stinging snows can't subdue their fire and brilliancy. How steadfast through all the

changes of the year! And how much Humanity can learn from the lessons of Nature! Man is so fickle: never constant to an ideal: the shouts of "Hosanna" end in "Crucify"; professed friends are as changeable as the purple and the gold in the banks of sunset clouds. I think just here how Pompey was the idol of Rome: the populace drunk with hero-worship, shouting themselves hoarse over triumphal arches—but after the Battle of Pharsalia, the defeated warrior and statesman had no one in all the world, in all that mighty Empire, to yield him an asylum from his foes. It is well that The Old Book turns us to the Cross-Bearer—"the same, yesterday, to-day and forever."

3 P. M. We have just finished dinner, and I am in my corner, watching the dripping eaves—the drops of water as they fall and flash in the sunshine look like Hepaticas, and my thoughts go out to the warm woods of March. Dr. and Mrs. Ageweight dined with us, and we had a fruit pudding, on which Mrs. McDonald prides herself, and justly. The Dr. is smoking in the study and talking with the Master: Mrs. Ageweight is reading a letter to Mrs. McDonald in the kitchen—Philip's, of course. He sent the Master a box of the loveliest carnations. I am going now to Monksrest with Harry to see the daffodils; the lad has just come and will spend the night here. How we will satiate our eyes with the golden blossoms! They are like the star that now fills the whole western sky with the personality of its light.

CVII.

February 21, 1900.

Harry took breakfast at 6, and I walked out to Brow-wait with him while the sky was thick with stars. He got down to his office in time to begin his work at 7. He will come back again to-morrow to dine with us, and keep the holiday, and spend the night. I am just back to the cabin from my walk with him, and Mrs. McDonald and I are going to have a griddle of buckwheat cakes and a cup of coffee. The train has just whistled for Cowldeep and the Hemlock Valley, and the sound, drifting up the mountain-side, disturbs a crow in our own splintered hemlock. There is so much gladness in his voice; I know he is thinking of many a delicious Spring breakfast in the swamp below us where the snow has melted and left a soft, restful green. The dear bird, how he rewards us with his confidence! No fear of hurt nor treachery here in the bounds of Ageweight, and knowing it, he never moved from the path as I went by; I stooped and petted him. Would that there were such trust as this among men! And yet that Day must be, for that is what the old Seer of Patmos had in mind when he wrote of the New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

There came an Indian to the Anderson cabin in that old time, and when the Master of the house seemed not to know him, he said: "You taught me twenty-five years ago from that Old Book," pointing to The Bible, "about the White

Man's Chief—The Christ—and in all that time I have tried to live His Life; for, when the end come, I must look my dead son in the face—the little lad of whom I told you, killed by an arrow when he was five summers old—and when I meet him, I don't want him to be ashamed of his old father." I thought it such an exquisite trust in what The Gospel teaches us. The Master told this story to Harry last night, and I thought you would like to know it. The Abbot is on Bluet Ridge, as I write, coming over for a morning word, and the dogs have gone to meet him. It is better, you see, for the dogs to go to him, than for him "to go to the dogs." Convallaria has finished your moccasins.

CVIII.

February 22, 1900.

The snow is gone, Wallie, gone to inspire and swell the bosoms of the mountain streams with song, and we are glad. The rain is falling quietly here on the hills, with music in its voice, and all the trees are blossoming with pearls of light. Herbert is home for Washington's Birthday, and brought Motley's "Dutch Republic" for the Master. What a strong dramatist Motley is! The very scorch of the lightning is in some of his word-picturing. We all will enjoy the books; and you, too, will rest in them, forgetting the world—its cares, anxieties and toil. I walked with Stephen yesterday along Cardinal Brook,

and saw the red squirrels busy among the trees; heard and saw, besides, the bluebirds in the willows that showed in the strong sunshine a perceptible flush of gold, for Spring has touched their frozen hearts. We went far beyond the bounds of the hills, and came upon an old church that was being pulled down. We stopped; and, as we watched the sad work, I thought—not how it had served its purpose, not how it could not be repaired—it was so old; but of all the precious services that had been held there—the midnight Masses, the Christmas carols, the Baptismal Waters of Life, the marriage bells, the tolling for the last sad rites of the departed, the generations that had found this House the Way to Heaven. I thought of all the vicissitudes of this unstable life, and then found comfort in His words: "I change not." Another man stood by, watching, as well as we, and presently he said to me: "Well, they will not teach the folly of the Cross there any longer." I knew the man well, and his family; and I answered him: "The last thing your dying father ever sought was the Cross to sign his brow in Baptism. Go home now, and on your knees ask The Christ if your father made a mistake;" and with this we went our way.

The Monastery boys have no lessons to-day, and Dr. Ageweight sent them a barrel of Baldwins for the holiday. The day is very generally observed by the mountain folk. Mrs. Gardener and Herbert are here to dine with us, and Harry, too, is here. The Master tells him to be like Washington, and stick to what he under-

takes. Our dinner is just served—oysters, two roast turkeys, and the national dessert—pumpkin-pie. The sun has just come out gloriously.

CIX.

FEBRUARY 23, 1900.

The starry buds of the night have broken and blossomed into the flowers of day; and all the meadows, the valleys, the streams and the hills are flushed with the myriad blossoms of gold and rose. The meadow-lark sings his minstrelsy of Spring, the bluebirds make the willows glad with song, and the crows tell that there is good living in the swamps—they are hastening to a feast. The Epicures! I passed by the old church again, and it is all gone now. First the roof, then the frame, then the foundation, then no trace at all of where the House of God stood so long. In a short time, men will not know that a church occupied this ground; but there are names innumerable written in the Book of Life that found their way up to the Great White Throne through the gates of its glory, and these hold the little church in perpetual remembrance. I went into an old farm-house some mile or more on from where the church stood, and spoke to the owner of its removal: and as he brushed the sad tears from his eyes, he said: "Yes, it is gone: but it did a glorious work that will live, and in its place we have a better." And I thought how through all the centuries, when a civilization

perished, God gave another and better to take its place. The 19th century is better than the 18th: Anglo-Saxon Civilization better than the Roman that preceded it; and Man—risen, spiritual and glorified—will be better than the suffering, toiling Race of to-day. In this Present a world's tears break against the Rock of Ages, and I do not think it strange that S. Paul wrote of "filling up what is left behind of the sufferings of Christ." The compassions of The Eternal Spirit inspired an Apostle to write that "Jesus wept:" but the sunset of that Inspiration flushes the whole heavens with the promise—"There shall be no more tears, nor death, nor sorrow, nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passing away."

Stephen is singing as I write, and his glorious voice swells out on the strain and the words—"Not till Earth and not till Heaven pass away." The green-houses are full of daffodils now, and the cabin is filled with their fragrances. Mrs. McDonald has a North Carolina shad for dinner to-day, sent by Mr. Monroe to the Master, and we are looking forward to a treat. All send love to you, and the Master sends his blessing.

CX.

February 24, 1900.

The air is as soft as balm this morning, Wallie; those long, sweet notes of the meadow-lark fill the air, defying the Winter to come back;

and the cabin is all open to the healing fragrances of Spring. We are just in from Mass—the Festival of S. Matthias who was chosen in the place of Judas; and the simple narrative in The Acts shows that in this first election of a Bishop there was no wire-pulling. And Judas, what of him? The Christ said of him: "Good were it for that man had he never been born!" The awfulest words ever spoken. When all is done, a man's realization that he has fallen short of what he ought to have done, what he ought to have been —this is Hell; this is the meaning of Everlasting Punishment. Poor Judas! Not a soul in all the world to whom he could turn in the horror of that ineffable despair. But it is all forgiven—There; and "in the restitution of all things," he will be restored to his lost Apostleship. We walked again yesterday; but the wind was cold, and the clouds were dull, and the sunshine had none of that warm gold, and the birds were hushed—it was cheerless, as I sauntered among the ruins of the old church. Stephen sat on a fence overgrown with lichens, and sang gloriously, trying to coax a dogwood into blossoming; but while it listened entranced by his tenor, it told him it must wait. I sat in the shelter of a rock, and the conscience-stricken wind moaned round me; but I heeded not the weather and the things outside, for I was thinking of what used to be within the walls of the House of God whose work was done. How the sun streamed in through stained glass, flashing on the uplifted chalice and the white vestments of the Priest, and lighting up some sweet moth-

er's face as she knelt with her sons to take the Eternal Bread. And those sons are now strong in Christ, and are out on the world's battle-field with the Blue of Heaven on their character. In their fight with temptations they are inspired by their mother's strength, and are exerting the influences that transform men into the Likeness of Jesus Christ. Ah, now, I see a bridal party! The bells clash, the organ rolls grand chords on the air, there is a scent of white roses, and a smother of whispers—"Here she comes!" And the twain are made one at the Altar, till death do them part. And a year's length is sped, and the bride creeps back, no expectant whispers to herald her: she comes in crape, and lays a bunch of violets on a new-made grave, for he is gone. She is alone till death do them join. "Come, Father!" and I am roused from my reverie to go back with my glad singer, for the day is done.

CXI.

February 25, 1900.

The storm has tired itself out and every one else, Wallie, and is quiet. There is scarcely the heaving of a sob. I am looking at the dome of the mountains, and there the sunrise has spread a tabernacle for these last three days of the Winter, that they may take farewell of their realm and be gone. It is cold, and the snow spreads in cheerless wastes, and the frost locks the earth again; but still there are signs of

Spring—a spider creeps over my paper as I write. His dormant time is past, though good Mrs. McDonald said again last night: "God forgive the bear for lying." I think both she and Mrs. Bruce are scarcely just to the bear, for he *saw* his shadow Candle-Mass Day and went back to his den, *not* prophesying an early Spring. Stephen and I walked again yesterday to the ruined church, and in a pile of brick and mortar on the south side that defied the furious blasts from the north, I found a dandelion yellow with strong gold. It changed the whole bleak, shivering scene into a soft tenderness of life, and I thought how a gleam of the Incarnate Charity at last changes the whole moral and spiritual realm into the very Likeness of the Manhood that was at first swathed in the strains of the Gloria in Excelsis, and at last stretched out the Divine Hands in the benedictions of The Cross. We have had breakfast, and Stephen has just brought the mail. I have a letter from Mrs. Elliot who is in the orange groves of Florida. I know she misses Boston and her house there that looks out on ten thousand leagues of the sea and its roar and dash and salt and glorious health. Stephen has brought his buggy round to the study door and is going to take the Master home with him for an hour. Mrs. McDonald speaks to the colt and tells him he must be a gentleman. We were all at Mass at 7, and madame and I are going back to the second service at 11. It is Quinquagesima Sunday—the last of "the Jessamine Sundays," as Mrs. Elliot calls them. And it is an appropriate name

indeed, among the blossoms of Florida, where you and I spent that year of Heaven. It is time to go to service. Stephen has just brought the Master back. I am going to bring Harry back with me for the day.

CXII.

February 27, 1900.

Yesterday after lunch I went out with the Rhode Islander who had the morning to himself and came and spent it with us here at the cabin. We stood where the wood has been cut, and looked off toward Caltha on that long stretch of oaks that have kept their rich bronze-red leaves all the Winter. Lonely and sombre and undisturbed: a temple of grandeur, a house of prayer, a very cloister of devotion. Here man has not profaned the Glory of God. After my fellow-worshipper had left me, I went to the Monroes to dine with them, as I had promised Stephen. We sat a while and watched the lanterns gleam on the dusk. Mrs. Monroe calls them her "Winter fire-flies." We had a roast turkey, and after dinner, Stephen and I smoked one of his Christmas cigars in the south window that has all the luxuriance of Summer blossoms and sweetness. A Jacqueminot rose burned like coals of fire, and told the shrinking thermometer to keep up its courage. While we talked, a tame crow that Harry gave Stephen came into the room and hopped up among the daffodils. He must be an æsthetic bird to be

so fond of fragrances, though he has always had the name of being keen of scent for things not altogether lovely.

This morning at sunrise a pillar of cloud and fire rose high into the heavens, as the far-off train waited at the station, and there was such glory and splendour in it. The morning spread its tabernacle of peach-blow light on the dome of the hills again, and the undaunted birds are telling the woods that the day will be like Spring —swelling the sap, and loosening the dumb tongues of the brooks. Just to see the light on the mountain-tops! It would bring a blessing to toiling men could they but stop a moment and learn that the heights are first illumined, and afterward the valleys. The men who heard the Gloria in Excelsis were on the hill-tops, and the men who hear it to-day are on the heights. It is because the Christ was born on the hills, and died on the hills, and from the hills went back to the Triumph of His Throne—that He is able to minister consolations to souls in the depths of suffering. To-night we are all going to the Monastery to eat Shrove Tuesday pancakes and to enjoy a nut-cracking. I am to read "Tam o' Shanter" to the lads.

CXIII.

Ash Wednesday, February 28, 1900.

February has given her last gift to the world, Wallie, except a last royalty of purple stars to draw round to-night's hours of sleep; and to-

morrow Spring will sit upon the throne of empire. We remember no more the anguish. I found a crow caught in a thicket, as I walked with the boys, Stephen and Harold, yesterday. Harold was home for the day, and we walked to his house with him, after his call at the cabin. I loosened the unfortunate bird, and then he looked at me with so much gratitude. The scent of the south wind was in his midnight plumage, and he attempted to thank me with a song which was a failure from a musical standard, though not from courtesy. If during the day you hear a crow more demonstrative in his eloquence than others, know that it is he. The sunrise gave madame, Her Majesty, the Passing Month—a sceptre and a crown of reddest gold, and a fire of rose-light sifted through all the frosty air making it soft with the new life of Spring. Gregory Livingstone called yesterday and brought his sweet chunk of a lad, Kenneth, and the dear little fellow sang a song about the violets that thrilled me with a feeling of Spring that has tingled in my nerves ever since. The meadow-larks, too, this morning sing with full-throated gladness. The maples burn with new tides of life, and the brook in the sunshine has all its Cardinal glow of Summer-time. The year is verily rising from the depths of death. We all went to the Monastery last night and had the Shrove Tuesday pancakes and maple syrup. Besides the cakes, we had fried oysters and coffee which was sent to the Abbot by a gentleman who has a plantation in Brazil. Herbert came home with us from Mass this morning

Original by John DeCamp.

HAROLD ANDERSON.

for breakfast, he is here for half a day with his mother. Here on the hills the same services were heard 200 years ago, and to-day Heaven and Earth are one in the worship of Him Who in that first Lent carried the bitter Cross. "What hast *thou* done for me?" cries His voice to-day. We ought to give Him the untiring worship that goes up from the heart of the forests. Harry sits with me before the glowing hearth, and after our simple lunch will go out with me to the Monroes. Mrs. McDonald has asked him to remain with us until to-morrow morning. He brought the Master a box of Passion-flowers.

CXIV.

March 1, 1900.

Yesterday, Stephen brought us "The Love Letters of a Musician," and we have all read it. I sat in my corner this morning and read it as the lights went down the hills, and I shall hand it to Harry to-night: he, too, must read it. We see in it visions of Easter lilies and ripened wheat-fields and the year's death and the perished golden-rod bent down with snow. The story has such an exquisite refinement, and its beauty is like the hemlock trees when the snow rests lightly on their branches. It thrilled me to see its pain end in such triumphant joy, and I put the book down with the feeling that I had been in a higher mood.

We are still twenty days from the Equinox, but the first thing this morning I cried: "Lo the Winter is past!" We feel so much differ-

ent when March comes. The rain-drops hang in pearls of blossoms from the trees, and at midnight Spring began. Although there are long stretches of snow on the hills and in the fields and in the depths of the woods, still there is certainty that there is but a step now between the frosts and a world of blossoms. A squirrel chattered to me yesterday evening as I walked, and a meadow-lark sang his sweet notes of comfort. It softened all the severity into an hour of balm. I hid behind a ledge of rocks on the south side of the hills, and there the sun was warm, and no touch of ice in the song of the brook. The mosses and the lichens glistened with steam on the wet, black stones, and the sumachs had all the intense brilliancy that burned so steadily through all the bleak months of cold. A busy crow was near enough to speak with, and he told me that he was making a waterproof coat, for he was going at midnight to the new month's reception, and, as there would be rain, he did not wish to have his full-dress suit ruined. I told him I wished I were as weather-wise as he, and he said that I could no more learn it than he could learn to sing. I asked him then if he wished to learn to sing, and he said no, for his voice was still the same as in the Spring-time of the world's youth, and he would keep it unto the end. Mrs. Bruce met me on Bluet Ridge as I returned; she was on her way to the cabin with a branch of shad-tree that had blossomed on her hearth. How fresh they were! and all that woody smell, and so white in their frail beauty.

CXV.

MARCH 2, 1900.

I have just returned from "the boggy meadow," Wallie, where the patient "hermits" wait for Spring. I wish you could have seen the maples as the wind tossed their branches against the dark purple of the mountain-side. With the eyes of memory I saw all the beauty of their tender leaves and blossoms, and their fragrances were on the harsh air, refining it into the softness of May. I passed by an old anvil and blacksmith shop used a hundred years since, and that long ago brought back the songs of the glowing iron and a whole midnight of stars burning on the forge—but now the hands and the strength that made them are perished dust, and a net-work of wild-rose briers is spread over the ruined shop, where soon the warm rains and the sunshine will give a wilderness of pink blossoms. The old Indian River tossed the foam of its wild race high in the air, and dashed over the rocks furious in its strength, and caught the shad-trees that fringe its margins, and scattered broken rainbow light and stars on the air. Oh, there was so much health and restfulness and beauty in the walk! I wish you could have enjoyed it, too. Young Stephen came over yesterday evening after the storm, and brought a large box to the Master. We opened it with eager hearts and found it full of Easter lilies which some friends of the Monroes had brought with them from the Bermudas. How beauti-

ful they are and how they fill the cabin with their sweet life! Oh, there is so strong a personality in some flowers! and where there is such fragrance there must be a soul conscious of it all. Yes, an Easter lily has a soul. Mrs. Bruce is in the kitchen and has brought a purple orchid which through all the Winter she has cherished, and now it has rewarded her with a radiance like the depths of light above.

CXVI.

March 3, 1900.

That warm mist of onyx light drifts over the mountain-side again in this hour of sunrise, and the trunks of the trees stand like flaming columns. I am at the windows looking toward the Caltha, and there is a soft light there, brooding, with healing in its beams, over where the stream and the grass and the perished leaves of yesterday will soon shine with the conscious gold of blossoms. I sat in the rock chair yesterday, back of that window in heaven, as the sun sped over the home-stretch of the race, and looking over to the avenue of "The Ghosts of the Leaves," thought of the strange, sweet story that Convallaria told me the other day of that long ago. It was a wild Winter night of wind and snow well nigh 200 years since, and an Indian was on his way to the cabin of the Regicide. Suddenly there shone before him a stalk of the Easter lilies, it would appear, erect and

beautiful in the storm and every petal and stamen well defined on the blackness. The fragrance thrilled him, he thought, and he wondered at a thing so strange. Coming nearer to it a voice spake, and, lo, a little child all luminous with the light! "Go to the cabin behind the Cleft Rock," it said, "and call my mother." The old chieftain said he would carry him in his arms to his mother. The child would not consent, and the Indian went to the cabin, and called the mother. "Why, it is not my child. He is dead: we buried him yesterday." The Indian's insistence was so strong, though, that she went with him. And the little dead child cried, stretching out its arms: "I can't find my way up to Heaven alone; come, mother, and carry me." "Oh, my babe, my babe," cried the mother, and a puff of snow filled her arms, nothing more; and the strong man carried her back to her home to wait until there shall be no more Sea!

CXVII.

March 6, 1900.

Her Majesty February came and usurped the throne of the year while young March, in an unguarded moment, was gone to see the blossoming mosses of the woods. His fine courtesy would not allow him to protest, but I overheard him tell the robins that he would not have to ask for the throne. "I bide my time," he said: "but a little while and you will see madame's

confusion, with the sun shooting fiery arrows all round."

The cabin is all closed again this morning, and the hearth-fires seem to have a new lease of power, as the logs crack and snap, and shoot out great tongues of flame, and fill the house with the odours of the woods. I was out in the swamp again yesterday, and the sumachs with burning torches led the procession of the flowers. The "Hermits of the bogs" were there in their purple cowls, and how like tulips of various colours they seem! The willows carried golden trumpets, and the many birds rained halleluias down. To-day, we shiver over the fire, though the persistent voices of Nature still sing that the Winter is past. How hushed it is! There is a rhythmic sweetness in the very silence of the snowflakes. Heaven seals the beginning of the Spring's career with whiteness: and the judgment means whether man have kept his Spring-time's whiteness of character. After Evensong I went yesterday and supped with the Monroes. We enjoyed a broiled steak with cress from the brook there in their glen, and, besides, we had an omelette and muffins and a cup of coffee. It was a cosey restful hour in that environment of refined life and books, and I love to go there. After supper, Stephen took me up to his study, and having lighted the hearth-fire and the candles, we sat and smoked one of his Christmas cigars. Far out on the hills the sunset burned on the budding oaks and the maples: the clouds were flushed with the delicate hues of the Arbutus: that wondrous

star glistened on the liquid gold, and vesper songs went up from the brook that has streaked the meadow with fresh grass. I left at 8, and by agreement met Harry at Brow-wait, and took him home with me for the night. We waved our lanterns long before we met, and Mrs. McDonald had a light in one of the dining-room windows where she waited for us.

CXVIII.

March 7, 1900.

February has fled. Picked up her snow-embroidered skirts, and stood not upon the order of her going, but went at once, as soon as the golden arrows of the sun fell around, uncomfortably near. Her majesty sped away, just as young March said. The crows are holding a convention in the woods, and the robins are chattering, and the meadow-larks are telling the glad news of Spring—ever new and ever old, and of which we never tire; the very same that filled the air, the first Spring after Columbus planted here the standard of the Cross. The air this morning stung the nerves of us all with a splendid activity, and the cabin is all new life. The ducks are jabbering about mudholes and worms, the dogs are racing through the woods, and old Mully—getting away from Jamie—flourishes her tail high in air, and flings herself about, regardless of dignity. I hear the boys of the Monastery shouting, out of doors—the sap has gotten into their blood. What pure, glad, un-

troubled voices! The old snake has not yet crept into the Eden of their lives with the hiss and sting of the old lie. I was up at 5, before the stars had covered their fires and the old Master sat alone in the library reading, or rather dreaming thoughts of worship over a book that had caught visions of God, and still quivered in every page with the throbbings of the writer's heart. I went down to the Caltha Swamp, and left him to himself. And there the brook sang, and the mossy rocks shone with the first light, and the trees were talking among themselves of the incense of blossoms—the hills were filled with their Benedicite. An old woman came through the stile, as I stood there: "What, good mother, out so early?" "Yes, Father, one never gets old who feels the joy of Spring, the birds, the swelling buds, the scent of flowers." And her firm, quick step told that her inner life was strong in immortal youth.

CXIX.

MARCH 10, 1900.

The hills are girt round with mists this morning, Wallie, and all the trees drip with steam. The gold of the East comes and goes on the clouds, and the day will turn them all into splendours of light, an hour hence. I sauntered through the woods yesterday with the Abbot and Stephen, and it was real Spring. The sun was warm on our backs, and there was not a breath

of wind. As we looked off on the distant woods, we could see them swept clean and fresh, and broad stretches of sunshine filled them, and every tree seemed so well defined in the brightness, and the purple heat quivered above the ground, and gnats and flies flashed and buzzed in the warm air, rejoicing that their long sleep is past. Ferns brightened a whole hillside near Cardinal Brook, as fresh and bright as if they had not known a three months' fight with storms. A bluebird touched a bough with a bit of sky, and heaven seemed nearer to us from his moment of visitation. An owl in a dusky hemlock whose glory wanes before the Spring, came and sat in the door of his house, and cried: "To let, to let!" But a robin to whom the offer was made, showed himself a bit ungracious, and quarrelled with the philosopher who turned without a word and retired within the abode of wisdom. The Abbot turned to Stephen with a laugh, saying: "Another illustration, boy, that it takes two to make a quarrel successful." Convallaria found an Hepatica a day or two ago, at the door of the cave under Bluet Ridge, and this morning she brought the plant to me full of blossoms, hastened by the warmth of the hearth. Mrs. McDonald found the cow, a few minutes ago, looking through the green-house windows, a wistful look in her eyes, and she seemed to think that a bunch of carnations would go far toward curing the melancholy that consumes her in the Spring. All send love to you, and hope to see you to-morrow.

CXX.

March 12, 1900.

The sun has turned all the mountain-sides to peach-blow; and the meadow-lark, mounting the clouds, pours down the healing songs that warm the frosty air with Spring life again. The ground is frozen hard this morning, the naked trees shiver, the wind howls—but the glad, defiant birds bid shivering mortals not to take it to heart—there is a great surge of blossoms the other side of the transient frost and cold. The water shines in sunlight, as Cardinal Brook flashes down the glen, and there is a steam on the mossy rocks that makes the little valley seem cosey and warm. I find the hearth-fire a comfort this morning, and the logs glow like mid-Winter, though only three days ago the cabin was all thrown open, and the sun poured in, and the fire was intolerable—the changes are so extreme. I met a crow yesterday, and he held a kalendar, from which he was reading, and in the same tone of voice that belonged to his fore-fathers in the Garden of Eden, and as he read, his audience listened with the utmost deference, while he informed them that the Master and all the household of Ageweight love the birds, and within this city of refuge, no harm could molest them, they were as safe as in that sweet Eden of old. Ah, man will get lost Eden back, when man trusts man like that! The hearts of mortals like the noonday splendours of light; character like the stainless blue; every home like the

Home of Nazareth; no serpent of temptation in the Tree of Life, with its blasphemous lie against God; the poison of sin no longer sting and madden the veins of Humanity; the wild roses of the swamp weave peace over the cannon's mouth; the swords of war rust into bluets. The wind sinks to æolian whispers and the russet leaves on the porch tell us that across the ridge of noontide the day will soften into the softness of balm again. Mrs. McDonald's linnet has just been stung by an arrow of the East: just hear his Benedicite!

CXXI.

March 13, 1900.

The sun nears the middle of his race now, Wallie, and all the power, the majesty, the splendour of the year breaks upon him from the heights. The wind is hushed this morning, and there is promise of heat in the air. All over the hills drifts the warm turquoise light that is so restful to weary mind and heart; the soft colour of apple-blossom light on the waiting woods easily reconciles one to wait for the blossoms themselves. How all their trunks, and all the stems of the shrubs, glow with sunrise, like the golden pipes of an organ! All the clouds have weighed anchor, and drifted from the West to the seas of the morning, and all their full sails burn with gold as they wait for the Admiral of March to lead them to the conquest of Summer lands. We kept the cabin

closely, yesterday, and shivered before the fires, for the north wind scourged the hills and Winter stung the air. I was out a while with Stephen through Cowldeep, and there was a comforting promise from the hermits who stand glorious with strength and hidden blossoms through all the rage of frost and death. I saw some men waist deep in water digging out a race, others tightened rails on the road over Cowldeep, and on the south side of the bridge, I saw a tramp shivering over a fire of coals which he had built. I spoke to him, and he answered with a surprise of gladness in his voice, as though he expected no kindly recognition from men. Poor worthless fellows! And yet the Christ said that what is done to the very least, the lowest of mankind, is done to Himself. We can't know what God means, until we learn the Christ's estimate of the value of a human life. The sunshine mounts the barriers of the hemlocks and the sumachs as I write, and the library is filled with day. It's like a tidal wave of daffodils, as it breaks upon the hills. The Abbot and the boys were here last night, and, we still feel the pleasure of their visit.

CXXII.

March 15, 1900.

The clouds are rich with dust of gold this morning, Wallie; and the heavens are grey, as if the ashes of a burnt-out day had been strewn upon them. The mountains are cold and omi-

nous of snow, though there are but twenty-nine days ere the bluets wrap their first-born in turquoise light, and lay them on the Altar of the hills—a glad thanksgiving. The trees are whispering of new leaves this morning, and there is not a bird to cheer the hushed air, for they are all listening to what the trees are saying. A crow sits on a leafless branch near me, listening to the rivulets of sap that are going upward; and a robin on the lawn has his delicate claw on the pulse of March to see if the fires of Spring have begun to burn the lusty monarch's blood. He seems satisfied with the diagnosis, and has gone to tell the Hepaticas that they may put off their blanket of russet leaves, for Heaven is ready to send them down a coat of many colours. The dear bird ought to know, for he has winged the steeps of heaven so often. I met a group of rough men in my walk yesterday, sunning themselves against the warm rocks of the old mill. I thought they seemed to feel my presence there an intrusion; but I bid them a good-day, calling them gentlemen—a word that the world never knew until the lightnings of the Gloria in Excelsis burned it on the skies of Bethlehem—and I was rewarded by seeing them soften toward me in a moment; they seemed to know that the aristocracy of The Gospel had made us brothers. The lost world's systems of Isms will all break themselves at last against the gentleness of The Gospel, and the Righteousness of Christ will be the only Might. We all go to the Monastery to sup to-night, and enjoy a steak garnished with the first cress from

Cardinal Brook. I am to give some Shakespeare recitations afterward and enjoy an hour with the boys. It is high noon now. Harry Phillips has just come to pay his deference to the Master and to return "Coriolanus" which he has read and re-read. I tell him I want him to be like the young Patrician, except his scorn. He has put the book into the case with its crimson fellows, and has gone out to see Mrs. McDonald in the kitchen. I hear her counting "11, 12, 18, 20, 24!" He brought her two dozen daffodils in a box that he carried carefully under his arm. Just in from the city, and the agent told the lad he could have the rest of the day to himself. We are all very glad, for he has not been able to be with us much of late. He brought a strong dash of Spring with him, and even the linnet tunes himself to a new fulness of songs. We had a baked shad for dinner, omelette and toast, muffins and mince-pie, and a cup of coffee. We are going to keep the lad, and take him with us to the Monastery. Goodby. I am in my corner looking out on the green hills.

CXXIII.

March 16, 1900.

I had a pleasant episode in my life yesterday, Wallie. After writing your note, I went out into the shrouded fields and stood a while at the wires. Over on the Maple avenue, I saw the overseer of the Gardener estate driving along in his cart, and, though so far away, I waved my hand to

him in salutation. He saw, and returned a like measure of courtesy, and that bond of sympathy between the man of letters and the man of hard hands gave a pleasure that went with me all day. The book of our daily intercourse with men is a living Gospel that makes the Christ the mightiest factor in the world's life. We must find Him in the lives of men; we can't know Him from the page of printer's ink. How much nearer to Him is the man who keeps his temper than the learned theologian who wrangles over creeds! Do you remember how He said that the sign of the Son of Man would be shown on the heavens? Well, that sign of the Son of Man is the Cross, and we must look into the heavens if we would see it; we must look into the depths of light for the revelation of the mystery of suffering—and back of all that is the power and the great glory of His very Presence and coming again. Mrs. McDonald has just filled the vases of the study with daffodils, and they shine like that one lone star on the Western sky. Who would think that all this beauty and youth and fragrance could spring up out of the frozen earth? And thus shall the obdurate hearts of men be softened at last by the Light that broke from That Grave in the Garden. We feel the strong personality of the Spring here on the hills, and the breast of every bud on all the trees is ready to break into a song. Convallaria is just coming over Bluet Ridge; she has been to take some lilies to the Abbot. Young Stephen is to take a cup of coffee with us at noon, and we are going out for lichens.

CXXIV.

March 17, 1900.

The calendar says it's Spring; the thermometer says it's mid-Winter. A crow, aloft in the light, says the shivering thermometer has no courage. The hills are all spread with cloth of gold this morning, Wallie; the brook sings on merrily adown the glen, with broken fetters of the ice lying all round. The chords of music were stronger than the cords of frost. Though the trees are insulated with ice, every bud has a song in its breast, to tell of the broken sepulchres of the flowers; and the sunbeams are bearing the snow splendours up to heaven to turn them into the life and the fragrances of April rains. The Master read last night to a number of the school-boys a story of a woman in Scottish history who lost her life in a snowstorm late in Spring. She started out one morning, with babe at breast, to walk to a distant village; but as she journeyed the warm sunshine gave place to clouds and storm. The blinding snow at length bewildered her, and she was numb with cold. Stumbling, by chance, upon a great rock on the moor, she wrapt her child in her own scant clothing, and placed him in a cleft, on a bed of warm, soft heather, and then stumbled on for a short distance, and fell, unconscious, in the drift. Next morning some shepherds found the dead mother, her face glorious in death, and a babe's sobbing led them to the rock, where the child was safe, no harm having come to him in the

storm that cost his mother her life. He lived to man's estate and prospered—worthy of such a a mother—and came back in his old age to his native village to die, telling to them around his deathbed that he was about to find shelter in the very place where he found it when a babe—in the Cleft of the Rock—the Rock of Ages. I tell you the story, thinking you might not have heard it. The Monroes are to dine with us to-night at 7, and Mrs. McDonald is getting ready some wild duck that a sportsman brought to the Master last night.

CXXV.

March 20, 1900.

March blows the trumpet of the Equinox to-day, Wallie; from now onward the sun's journey through the heavens burns with life and power and glory. Old Indian Creek roars on its course, telling the glad tidings to the trees and the shrubs on its banks; the crows are going north; the skies drop down the songs of birds; all Nature rejoices, and lifts up the chorus of its thousand-fold Benedicite. The Hemlock valley is full of ghosts this morning—the ghosts of other Winters come back to carry the passing Winter unto its fathers. The train fills the valley with echoes as it goes out into the great world; the "Hermits" lift their cowls, and pray that the journey may be peace to the travellers, that they may be kept from every danger of the way. How content they are to occupy their lowly station! Never to

stir from the place of their birth; never to lose heart through all the desolations of Winter; never to cease teaching a doubting world that men must rise again. Its withered leaves strew the bogs, but the buds of the coming year tell that death shall be lost in Life. We have just finished an early breakfast, and Mrs. McDonald is putting out the candles—their light is gone to keep company with the stars. The fire dreams on the hearth, resting from its work. The ducks are having a splash in the brook; the robins on the lawn are jabbering about slugs; old Mully contributes a heart-searching bawl to the chorus of glad voices about the cabin. The Spring is in her blood; it's time to turn her back on the past, she thinks. There is a touch of gold on the willows, and such a wholesome smell goes up from the woods. The Master sits on the porch, enjoying the sweet fragrances of the year. The Summer of the house can soon trust itself out of doors. I sat under a tree in Caltha yesterday for a while, and the grass glistened with the soft rain that fell in drops of pearl from the branches. The woods always have something new to tell, and something that adds to the dignity of life.

CXXVI.

March 22, 1900.

My pen has been out to say "Good morning" to the crows, Wallie; and how many things they said to it, I know not, but it paid the utmost attention. I think they told it, for one thing, that the

ink would no more be in peril from the frost, and that when it needed colour they would come and stir it with their midnight wings. Just hear them! I saw eleven of them on wing, pushing woodward to wrap themselves in the warmth of the hemlocks where the night has gone to sleep. The last snow crunched under my feet, and the night had strewn the fields with frost jewels, every one of which held a blazing mirror to the sun. The very silence of the fields thrilled me with its health, and I felt myself in the sanctuary of worship that makes men as broad-chested as God's blue. We live too much within doors, and depend too much on stoves and thermometers and medicines. There would be fewer doctors' visits, and we would forget a thousand ailments, and would cease to look at things with bilious eyes, and old age would come gloriously like the foliage, and we would look into the face of the last enemy and find man's truest friend—if we would abandon the stuffy houses, and, like the birds, live more in the fields. Moses, we read, was 120 years old; his eye was not dim from age, he had all the superb strength of manhood, and for eighty years he had not been inside of a house. There was S. John Baptist. He was "in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel," and with thoughts as wide as the blue, and manhood drenched with the light, and sympathies as wholesome as that eternal health could make them—it's no wonder that such a man was chosen to reveal the Christ. And here my pen says five-minute sermons are enough. All send love.

CXXVII.

March 23, 1900.

The clouds this morning, Wallie, look as if a world of daffodils were veiled by their grey. It is the softest air we have had—all the harshness of the fields melted into the songs of the bluebirds. Caltha is luminous with the foam of the dashing brook and with the weight of gold that is to break from the patient blossoms beneath. There are but patches of snow left on the hills now, and they look like stretches of linen put out to bleach.

7:30 A. M. I have just come in from the great sanctuary of the fields. The frost was like a delicate veil of lace over the woods, and the shining crystals lay an unknown wealth under my feet. I think men are strongly tempted to extravagance by the splendours and the extravagance of glory in the world all round them. I met a worshipper beside myself. He stood in silence behind the old mill on the Gardener estate, near the warm ridge where the Hepaticas blossom sooner than anywhere else on the hills; and I went my way without disturbing him. He was a man who, evidently, had not made the best use of his advantages, had not gotten on in the world, had not kept abreast of the race, had not been true to the responsibility that God requires of men: but with all this environment of new buds and songs and light and music of the waters and new surgings of life from the sod, I felt that he must at last, feel the "far more exceeding and Eternal Weight

of Glory" and turn unto the Majesty of Manhood that will not be ashamed to stand in That Day before the Son of Man. The Abbot with a number of his boys was here last night and had a quiet hour with us, while the Master and Stephen Monroe played a game of chess. After the game, we had a song or two, not forgetting "a scrappet o' cake for the puir bodies," as good Mrs. McDonald said in her sympathy with the lads. I went through the green-houses of Monksrest again yesterday, and the sky is still held a prisoner in the hearts of the morning-glories. Cleft Rock was radiant with Cladonias, and I sat there a while to enjoy the warm buzzings of the flies. Harry has just come. He has the rest of the day to himself, and we are going to Monksrest, the gardener there is going to give him an Australian tree fern like that in Mrs. Anderson's bay window. We are just starting out. Mrs. McDonald is to have oysters in a chafing dish, and warns us to be back on time. At Monksrest, we are just back, Harry read an article on John Bartram, the first American botanist, and the Master, who saw the garden, tells us that the golden opulence of its chrysanthema lives in his memory a fadeless splendour.

CXXVIII.

March 26, 1900.

All is hushed on the hills this morning, Wallie: there is scent of rain in the air, and the sky is grey with clouds that have dusted their wings

with the pollen of the eastern gold. The birds fill all the vast silences with song, the ears are drenched with chords invisible from the heavens. Near at hand, a robin sings, and it's like the inspiration of some Easter carol. He has outgrown the timidity that scarcely allowed his voice to be heard the first of the month, and sings now with full-throated courage that makes fearful mortals take heart again. A crimson feather from his breast floated down and methought it burned with the joy of Halleluias. The dear bird has recovered from his all-Winter, China-berry debauch, and in his new environment lives an exalted life that has put under foot, and forgotten, the old life of passion—and what instinct enables the bird to do, Man, with the Godhead in his breast, can do. We can overcome! The Master sits with a glass, examining a plate of Umbilicaria and Cladonia lichens which Stephen Monroe brought him yesterday. The ducks, too, on the porch, are likewise engaged, and evidently get food, whether for thought, or no, remains a question. A workman passes this way now, every morning. I met him just a short time ago, and the Spring was in his blood and in his firm walk. The way is long for him, but he loves the woods—and the companionship of the crows, and the songs of birds, and the wealth of lichen colour on the rocks and the primrose gold of sunrise on the hills go with him all day, a tonic to the hours of work. Such men know the length, the breadth, the depth, the height of questions that burn men's very soul-depths: they conquer nar-

rowness. Convallaria has gone out to find the first blood root: Mrs. McDonald is talking with Mrs. Bruce about Easter bonnets: Jamie is teaching Mully the sin of dancing—she showed herself a little hilarious over a cabbage. All send love to you.

CXXIX.

March 27, 1900.

The moon shot a bunch of silver arrows into my room at 5 this morning, Wallie, and they had been dipped in the fire of day. It is the busy time of whistles, as I write—they are calling the world of labour to its work. The hum of industry has closed the gates of sleep. The sunbeams are marching over the hills: the sap is coursing through the veins of the woods: the brook is singing to the lichened rocks: the birds are telling, on the keys of heaven, that the frosts and the snows are wending their way to the lost Yesterdays. Man and all Nature are at work. The Master is out to see the woods in their ermine robes. How beautiful they are this morning! The hemlocks look as if Winter had received a new lease of power, not knowing that this last snow is the winding sheet of March. I went out to drink the beauty for a while, and saw the workman from beyond Caltha Swamp, as he went to his work. The light snow seemed more like white blossoms on the bosom of the hills. The green-house is full of Easter lilies now, holding the old fra-

grances of Eden, and like the snow for whiteness. The boys of the school are all out on the mountain-side tossing the snow, shouting in their glee, filling the old hills with their ringing voices, giddy as the brook. The stately crows think that students have but little dignity. They have a recess in a few days now; not the crows—the boys, I mean. The crows say that there is fine living in the swamps now, and they are very busy, no time for rest. I asked one of them what that bar of song was that I heard this morning, and he said with modesty that it was a crow-bar. I think the robin was unnecessarily frank when he said that the crow's voice was a cross between a buzz-saw and the bray of a jackass. The crow retorted that the robin had just recovered from an all-Winter debauch and is not responsible for what he says.

CXXX.

March 28, 1900.

I sat with the Abbot an hour on the south porch of the Monastery, yesterday, Wallie, and enjoyed the movements of the crows in the old walnut-trees. The robins on the lawn were busy—one in particular braced himself, and then hauled a worm from the earth. And then what a dainty meal he made! He was satisfied with himself and all the world, and he had the right to be, for he had accomplished a great feat—though an envious crow called him a butcher.

The sun has no warmth this morning, for the wind is from the furious North, making a last effort to keep the Winter here. The crows in the woods watch the contest; and, pointing in derision to where the frost is melting on the south of the hills, cry: "Ca, ca, ca!" to add to the wrath of the old blusterer. A snowflake made a visit to the green-house, and asked one of the Annunciation lilies if it would like its nectar served with the frost of December or the maple syrup of the coming April—and when the beautiful flower smiled graciously, the lonely snowflake lost heart, and now lies a radiant tear reflecting the splendours of rainbow light from one of the stamens of the flower. And thus shall all that pertained to the Winter be changed. I stood in the shelter of a ledge of rocks where it was 30 degress warmer than 10 feet away, and the first bit of Arbutus flushed into its exquisite, soft pink of blossoms: farther down the windswept woods, the old house of sunny gables was warm with sunbeams; the russet leaves shone with red gold; the birds dashed carols from the trees. I watched the men go by to their work, each one carrying a dinner-pail; and I thought on how much higher plane life will be when we shall not have to give such constant care to the things of flesh and sense. The more divine within us will then no longer lie undeveloped, and that will be Heaven. S. Stephen was so glorious of countenance in the hour of martyrdom because the Godhead of his life dominated the life that must perish.

CXXXI.

March 29, 1900.

Winter still lingers, and has held the throne of March throughout the month, Wallie. You must not come to the hills again expecting Spring, until the fragrances of the Arbutus on the south wind call you. I found a bit of Spring, though, in my walk yesterday in the valley. Getting beneath an hill, suddenly there was a great calm, and the air was like May. The flies and the gnats made music, and dashed about exuberant with life. A tramp lay on the red russet leaves: they were able, even in death, to give comfort to man. I tried to speak to him, but he would not look up, and so I left him to himself. The waves of light roll gloriously over the hills this morning, and the splendours of light make one forget the sting of frost in the air. I have just been out to Caltha, and a lady who is on a visit to the cabin was with me. She went out pale and weary-looking, like a fading lily, but she came back just overpowered with the strong surgings of health, and her face was as if all the roses of June had kissed her over and over again. If she were to write a book now, it would be full of optimism, and would make the world better. Books fail to reach the world's aching heart because the writers have never felt the miracle of out-of-doors life, and heard the robins of Spring-time sound their clarions of gladness. A robin just now has dashed the air with notes that would blunt the edge of every

ailment in the world. We read S. John's Revelation, and are thrilled with the health of Heaven, and know that his very pen was a health-resort—why, that old Seer of God had no house but the open skies of Patmos. No wonder his words burn sick hearts and minds like an electric wire. The Monroes all come to dine with us to-night, and Stephen is to play some of the Passion music. There is a fire on the lawn: I am going out to get its scent now.

CXXXII.

April 2, 1900.

The year clasps another child unto its bosom and calls it April. The birds welcome it with carols; the brooks and the wind and the trees are rejoicing: a million sunbeams kneel and touch the swaddling-clothes with congratulations. The air is soft and sweet on the hills this morning, Wallie, and the music of the Monastery bells beats it into many fragrances. How full the old fields were of bluebirds, as I walked! As if the sky had fallen. A sight that I would rather see than the Paris Exposition, with the loneliness and desolation of its crowds of people. Here in the fields is the very sweetest sense of companionship, and I am never lonely. I wish you could see the mountains now! The harshness is gone, no trace of snow, nor the barren woods—the morning has spiritualized it all: the towering heights are like

a pale turquoise veil let down from heaven. Sunny Gables is warm with Spring light this morning, and there is a sense of unbroken calm there on which the world can't intrude. The trains whirl by, the whistles screech, the clamouring of voices breaks the air—but in the environment of that old house, with its clean wind-swept woods, and russet avenues touched with daffodil gold from the flying clouds—the peace is unbroken, the peace which passeth understanding. It touches the peevish, fretful life with its miracle of health. I stood, in my walk, under the hemlocks where the night had taken shelter, and the old Indian creek sang the very same song that it learned as it lay in the arms of Creation, and through the dust and mystery of the ages has carolled ever since, and it sang, as though it were a fresh inspiration; and I listened as if I were the first mortal that had ever been entranced by its soothing melodies. But what chords of song, of man's invention, do not tire men at times?

CXXXIII.

April 3, 1900.

I was up at 4:30 this morning, Wallie, and saw the stars put on their vesture of light invisible to meet the day. That old plane tree that has stood so stark all Winter, and through whose ghastly boughs last Summer's leaves sobbed in the storms, a robin sat there and be-

gan his glorious song at 5; and though the world is filled with day, he still cries: "Cheer up!" I heard his first note and was glad: and when I had listened half an hour, it was just as new; and even now I am listening and feel that his next note will be entirely new—something never heard before. I know that some would be driven mad by it, but such men are blasphemers. The Monastery was all open yesterday, and the lawns were fresh and green; with all the leaves raked up and burnt, leaving that soft blue haze of smoke in the air, and the smell that the woodman loves. The incense of the perished leaves; it is sweet even in death. I sat with the Abbot an hour, and read an article on Paris, from a magazine. Mrs. Bruce brought us a cup of coffee, and the sunny bronze of the Equator steamed from the dainty cup, as we sipped it. A robin on the lawn clattered about it: I think he wanted a sip, too. I was at Monksrest again, and heaven was unfolding from the morning-glory buds as of old; Annunciation lilies, too, sang Our Lady's Hymn, Magnificat, as the lightning of the sunbeams smote their breasts. The air was rich and heavy with their odours. All the snow of the wintry desolate hills is drawn and concentrated and softened into this miracle of blossoms. As I strolled with Stephen Monroe through Caltha, a honey-bee touched her harp among the dusty catkins, and I think the golden buds beneath the sods will be compelled to rise and open the door of their hearts unto the music ere the week be gone, and if you wander thither next Sunday—well.

CXXXIV.

April 4, 1900.

I went and sat long time yesterday in the old mill grounds, Wallie, and contrasted its busy past with to-day. How still it is! A squirrel scolds in the ruins—strangely out of place it seems in the mournful hush, instinct ought to teach him that he is a disturber of the peace. A moth, just risen from its grave-clothes, drifts dreamily on the light, showing buff and crimson against the sky. And what a world of activity once was here! From morning till night, and from night till morning chimneys blazed; and furnaces glowed with molten iron; saws and belts and flying wheels did the behests of men that sought wealth; hundreds of men and boys toiled and sweat for daily bread—now all is waste and crumbling and decay. A few short years agone, and furnaces burned like Vesuvius —now, in the broken plaster and brick, the icicles of Winter gleam, and the dews of Summer mornings flash trembling rainbow splendours on the dust and nothingness. Gone the wealth, the power, the work, the music of machinery, the lives that wasted muscle and brain and heart! Atropos cut the thread; Death cried: "They are mine!" Oblivion has drawn all within the compass of a handful of dust. It is night! But ere the month be gone, a million Spring blossoms will cry: "'Tis Day!" The Day when all the lost souls of men shall live again. The Master sits on the porch, as I write; taking a

bath in the sunshine and elixir of youth. The fire on the hearth glows and burns, and sends out tongues of flame to sting the air with the fragrance of the logs. A peach-tree near the fire-place has lost all fear of cold, and the soft faces of a few first blossoms look fearlessly toward the sun—though a sagacious crow thinks they have made a mistake. I hope not. Mrs. Bruce is coming over the ridge, and I know her arms are full of daffodils. for I see a gleam of pale gold like the Star.

CXXXV.

April 5, 1900.

A great company of sumachs with their torches went last night to look young April in the face, Wallie; and they came away glad and rejoicing, all the way of the woods lighted with their fires. They have more courage even than the dauntless meadow-lark, all through the death and desolation of the year. They are as glorious now, as when the October sunsets scattered flame. How indelible the colours! Like the blue of character. I thought of our workman passing Brow-wait at 6 this morning; and what a triumphal progress his walk over the mountains is! Rome gave triumphal processions to but few, and gave them with niggard hand. The thousands that rent the air with shouts of acclaim and victory and patriotism were envious—yes, mad with hatred of the men who wore the dictator's crown, and assassin

knives lurked in the stealth—but in this time, the humblest son of toil may pass through the length, the breadth, the depth, the height of Nature's pageant splendours of hills and woods and fields—and all the glory of colouring that spreads rainbows at his feet, all the majestic choruses of the winds, the roar of the waters, the songs of birds, the fragrances of the air, the wealth of flowers that look with God's pure eyes into the depths of men's souls—it's all the lowliest child's that e'er was born. God's triumphal progress for all! Pity that the multitudes of men can't know and realize and take it unto themselves. The gifts that a bluet can bestow are greater in value than all the world's ambitions. I went to the Monastery for Evensong, yesterday, and Stephen sang Our Lady's Hymn. All the hill folk were there, and we took the Abbot and Mrs. Bruce back to the cabin with us for supper. Convallaria has found some Calthas. Just think of that! Their gold in the heart is worth more than gold in the pocket, says the old Indian mother.

CXXXVI.

April 6, 1900.

A robin in the very highest tree began at 5, Wallie, to carol the coming of the King—The Light. It was the old tree that all Winter long sobbed and wailed in the desolations of the storms; but now, it remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that another Spring is born

into the world. Men forget so soon; it is necessary for Nature to proclaim over and over again life and resurrection from the shivered graves. The Master is gone out to the greenhouses, drawn by the gold of the daffodils. Mrs. McDonald is sipping a cup of coffee, as she sits in the sunshine of the south porch, reading a letter from Philip. Jamie is blathering with the ducks on the lawn—they don't approve of Jamie. They ate all the bean vines in the garden last Fall, and Jamie made some cursory observations that the modest waddlers can't forget. Mrs. McDonald said: "Ye micht have staid at home and looket after your beans." Stephen Monroe came early with the mail, came just as we were going in to breakfast. "Now, ye ne'er-do-weel," said our good mother, "ye will stay, and that settles it." And who could resist such eloquence as that? We had a broiled shad and muffins, and the boy drove home directly afterwards. I would have gone with him, but Harry is coming at 10 for me to help him with his Latin. I sit at the window that gives that one little glimpse of the railroad: back of the road are the fields of grain, and further beyond are the woods and sunny gables warm in the April light. A group of boys go past the window on the track at 4 o'clock in the evening, and I call them my Four o'clocks, wondering, as I see them go by, whether, like the flower after which I call them, their lives will shed fragrance on the world's night. They have it in their power to ban and curse: or to heal, assuage and soothe and bless. Man has such

infinite power! Cardinal Brook is enhaloed over with rainbow mist in the sunshine, and all the rocks are moist, and the lichens shine with their full luxuriance and beauty, and all the mosses are like soft velvet glistening with pearls. I wish I could send you a breath of its health, to clear your shop of its gloom and dust. The Master brought in an armful of daffodils, and they glow on my desk like stars. It is 10 o'clock and Harry has just come.

CXXXVII.

April 10, 1900.

I heard a robin just now, Wallie, tell a crow that there will be snow a foot deep within forty-eight hours. I wonder on what he bases his prediction? The Master smiled, and thinks with the weather-wise crow that the red-breast has been taking lessons in ignorance from the Weather Bureau. The sky is a November grey and looks like Winter. Who would think that the million weight of blossoms is back of all this cold, pushing it out of the domain of Spring, crowding it into the abyss of past toil and suffering! I sat this morning and watched the men go to their work. I thought, too, how so many speak and write of the curse of labour; but it was no curse, until the old snake in the Garden stung man's mind and heart with disobedience to God. The rest of Heaven which the toiling race ex-

pects does not mean idleness; even in the first cycle of man's life here on earth he had his appointed work. And The Christ who promised men rest led the busiest life the world has ever known; there were occasions when He had not time to eat, so the Gospel tells us. It is human selfishness and greed that now make work a slavery: but when Capital and Labour shall have become a community of interests, through the Brotherhood taught by the Incarnate God, then shall come that new Heaven and that new Earth which the Seer of Patmos foretold. There will be time then to strike off the chains of the shop, the mill, the field, the money market, the counter of trade, the student's desk—and the enslaved will go out among the hills to find health and life among the trees and the blossoms. The man in Genesis who said: "I have enough, my brother," I think him one of the grandest characters in the whole Bible history. Who can say it to-day? Sunny Gables is sombre this morning, and no brilliancy of light searching the woods. Still the Spring is advancing everywhere; there is a deeper red in the maple buds than yesterday, and the grass has lost much of the Winter's brown. Mrs. Bruce is here as I write; the boys of the school will leave to-morrow for the Easter recess, and the good mother is glad. I found a bit of delicious cress in the brook yesterday, and Mrs. McDonald gave it to us for supper with mayonnaise dressing.

CXXXVIII.

April 12, 1900.

The hills are wrapped about with mists this morning, Wallie, and a quiet rain drips from them, making all the air sweet. Every tree is silvery with rain-drops into which the light has breathed a tremulous beauty. It is a prophecy of the blossoms that will weigh them down ere the month be gone. The cabin is all open, every door and window, so that we lose none of the mystery of sweetness that drifts round—a visitant from the clouds of heaven. The crows held a convention in the old plane tree at 5 A. M. and the assembly broke up in much admired disorder, for an enthusiastic bird just twenty-one to-day invited them all to a birthday-feast. Far away in Century Swamp there is a horse that has ended all his equestrian labours. They are all gone, and not a crow will sing while the symposium lasts. I went out, after the whistles had called men to their work, and all the valley rang and resounded with music: the voices of the world's labour make no discords—it is singing its way up again unto God, and there shall be no more curse.

We are just in from Mass: it is 8:30 A. M. The chapel was crowded; all the hill folk had left their work at this busy time to come to this Maundy Thursday Eucharist, the day of its institution. There were men and women there

who had made a sacrifice to come, and Easter will be more precious to them. All our boys were present, even Philip and Harold and Herbert, and Arthur Clark came up from the city for it. The Altar was a bank of calla lilies and roses, and a very wilderness of soft lights; but all will be swathed in black for Evensong and the Day of Sorrows. We brought Harry home with us for a cup of coffee, and we are going out for a quiet hour afterward. Yesterday, Stephen and I were out beyond Century Swamp, and sauntered into an old house, drawn by the bright mosses that blossomed on the roof. We sat a while in the decayed dining-room which the sunbeams would not leave in desolation. In the midst of the room was a rude oaken table, that, too, covered with moss, typical of the family that once was gathered there, but now gathered unto "that far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory." Halle met us, and had his first bit of Arbutus. He showed us a bank that will be alive with it in a few days.

CXXXIX.

Good Friday, April 13, 1900.

The veil of mist still enfolds the hills, Wallie, and the whole land is sweet from the warm rain. What a difference the last twenty-four hours have made! The willows will be great clouds of gold, when the sun comes out; and all the maples are tipped with points of fire. The brook dashes

by under the hemlocks white with steam, and singing its full-hearted carols of Spring. I wandered out to Caltha Swamp, yesterday, to talk with the trees a while, and to listen to the music of the drops of rain. The moss is strewn thick with the little, sticky buds that served all Winter long as a covering to the leaves and the blossoms of a coming year—the world is full of shivered graves to-day, Nature's eloquent protest that there is no Death. On my return, I passed through the old mill grounds—and in the midst of the lowering clouds, the plashing rain and the chill, there was the comfort of a fire which some tramps had kindled under the shelter of the ruins. I spoke to them, and they answered me with courtesy: even these men return kindness for kindness. The fire warmed their bodies; and the Fire of God's Spirit will at last burn their hearts with the love that on this day mastered the world in that long ago, as He reigned on Calvary. So many of these poor wanderers seem outside the fold of Human Brotherhood, but He stands at the door of their hearts, pleading to be taken in as their Guest, for in the democracy of His vast love all are precious. How would you like to have a red-breast come, and perch in your dusty shop, and drop a bluet at your feet? It would change the whole day for you, would it not? It takes so little of the world's loveliness and beauty to lighten the world's toil. The Master sends his love and blessing, and the Easter salutation.

CXL.

April 14, 1900.

It is Easter Even, Wallie; wearing on toward sunset. It has been a precious, quiet day. I have always felt that this day of all the year must be kept in silence. Let a man get by himself, and refrain from talk. It will strengthen him, and that Grave in the Garden where He slept will speak with a Niagara crash of conviction. They are all home—the boys, and will be here to-morrow. Herbert was with me in the woods at 10 this morning for Hepaticas, and we found them thick under the golden-russet leaves. I am alone at the cabin now: the Master and Mrs. McDonald are out for a drive. The westering sun makes long shining avenues on the hills: the robins drench all the clear air with their songs: the grass is a soft green of gold; a forsythia on the lawn is thick with its yellow blossoms. In the library where I sit, there are Easter lilies and daffodils and dishes of violets, and in the presence of their loveliness I am exalted unto a finer consciousness.

6:45 p. m. I am just in from Evensong. There was a good attendance, and no end of Easter lilies. I am in love with the words of The Old Book which read: "My beloved is gone down into His garden to gather lilies." Mrs. McDonald has supper ready, a broiled shad, a salad of water-cress, a cup of coffee, muffins and sponge cake. Philip and Halle, Herbert and Harry are here to enjoy it with us, and we are all so glad

to have them. The Master says it is an elixir of perpetual Spring to him. The Kimball boys, by the Master's invitation, are coming to spend Easter Tuesday and Wednesday. Dear Mrs. McDonald throws up her hands with: "The whole gang!"

Easter morning, 9 o'clock. I give you the Easter salutation, Wallie: "The Christ is Risen!" And the day is glorious with gold. We were all at the 6:30 Mass at the Monastery, and all our boys were there. The attendance was large, and the Holy Place filled with sunrise and lilies and roses. And the woods! Every nerve throbs with the delight that comes from the Hepaticas, the Spring beauties, the erythroniums, the blood-roots, the ferns and the lichens. The whole store of freshness and loveliness and new life and fragrance sinks deep into our hearts, inspiring and demanding Alleluias of worship. Your prophecy of March 15th came true, for Harold has just brought in a bluet with its Easter salutation. And who would dare to look into a bluet's face, and say there is no Heaven after death? All the cabin is open to the sunny weather, and from the soul-depths of the lilies drifts the revelation that with Him the whole world is risen. Just hear the robins shake out their gold coins of song! And that reminds me that the Master has a book for you, on the birds, when you come to see us. Oh, the hills, the fields, the woods, the blossoms, and the glad faces of men cry aloud, with that Eternal weight of Joy, unto the Risen Christ Who proclaims: "Behold, I make all things new!"

It is now 6 P. M. We are on the porch enjoying the robins. Mrs. McDonald gave us a dinner worthy of her hospitality. All the boys were here, except Stephen, and he will take coffee and toast with us at 7. We had two roast turkeys and a roast of beef, and spinach from the green-house. Philip brought the dessert from his green-houses, strawberries, the renowned Brandywines. Harry brought a box of daffodils, and they shed their radiance on us during the feast. It has been a most precious day to us all, and we are prepared now in the calm of eventide to rest. Stephen is coming over Bluet Ridge, and Convallaria with him. He has had her out to get a smell of the new grass and the woods.

CXLI.

April 18, 1900.

The clouds still drop fragrances, and the hills are wrapped in mists, but the robins chant their clarion lays of courage, and the russet fields and meadows are bright with the first tender freshness of the Spring. How soft the new grass—there is health from just looking over its wide calm of beauty. Every cluster of clover holds an extravagance of emeralds on its bosom, and the brook is margined with a loveliness that burns its eternity of years into the first days of youth. A great surge of glorious promise swells from the sod, and its burden to mankind is that all things are become new. The old

Earth clasps another Spring-time unto its breast, wrapped in the swaddling clothes of pearl mists and blossoms—and the sunbeams, with splendours of lightnings breaking from their faces, protest that the shivered graves are become highways to Heaven. Death will come with a compassion of love in its eyes and give back the lost babe to its mother; the mad brains, the tortured nerves, the aching hearts, the wasting strength shall touch the hem of His Health—and there shall be no more tears, nor sorrow, nor crying; the former things are passing away! It's the burden of every song of the birds, the brooks, the winds; the meaning of every swelling tree and blossom; the message from every Altar that uplifts The Eternal Host, and pleads to the lost Race that Christ is Risen! I went out to Monksrest, and every blossom was holding its sapphire chalice, ready to be filled with sunshine. The old gardener has sat so long among the morning-glories, one seems nearer Heaven from being in his presence. The very fragile blossoms of the dim woods are a lever that lifts the ruined world up to the Great White Throne. The Master sends his love; Mrs. McDonald says, get a life-preserver and come to the hills.

CXLII.

April 19, 1900.

The storm is yielding to the sunshine, and the hills are radiant with translucent mists. The west wind drives the clouds before its chariot,

and the birds swell the chorus of a triumphal progress. I found the rocks alive with Saxifraga, in my walks yesterday, and, here and there, clusters of dicentra—white-hearts, were in blossom. White-hearts! A beautiful name for a flower: appropriate, too, for the child on the mother's breast secure, and appropriate, too, for a Manhood hereafter, when the great out-pouring of the Spirit of Christ shall have made stained souls as white as the Light. I sat and enjoyed the lichened rocks, as they dripped with the rain, their crests all white with the saxifraga bloom: and I thought that as the hard, impenetrable rock had yielded to the influences of the plant, so the most hardened and obdurate of mankind will, at last, yield to Him who loved the flowers, and, in His great Sermon on the Mount, drew Men's attention to the lilies. "It is the Day when this Nation was born," said the Master at the breakfast-table, and, looking up, I saw that he had hung out the Flag. Then my thoughts went back to Lexington and Paul Revere's Ride that 19th of April, 1775. As he sped through the forest road of sleepy flowers, the stars on high promised a field of stars to commemorate the heroism of that Day. Far off on the East the red bars of light stamped its deathless sunrise on the National ensign that was won through the poured-out blood of martyr hosts; and God sent down the blue to transfigure the character of soldiers and statesmen who died to make men Free. Thus we have the Flag, and he who loves it, loves the work of God, and will not go too far astray from right. The willows are a great

choir of music this morning, for their old hearts are yielding honey to the bees. I have been out with Harry to the mountains back of Monksrest. A trip we planned some time ago for his birthday: he is 17. It was an Arbutus quest; and we were successful, too, found it in great abundance —its lovely apple-green leaves and starry onyx flowers. And the Hepaticas! I never saw so many; breaking up through the sunset of the russet leaves; nestling close to the rocks and softening them with velvety dimples: and far up on the crags they gleamed—an open window in Heaven. How much higher those hills seem than ours! The very eyes weary of the climb, and these bodies of flesh find themselves confronted by the impossible. The lichens make them look so ashen; and I am whirled back through the burning cycles unto the time when the travail-pangs of Earth were buried 'neath these eternal obelisks. Egypt's wonder of Pyramids seem but a child's toys, as I look upon this workmanship of indomitable Power. I take Harry home with me for supper, and Mrs. McDonald is burning seventeen candles on a cake for him.

CXLIII.

April 20, 1900.

I like the Bible expression for morning—"the Spring of the day," it takes the harshness out of the Winter, and makes the Spring-time more delightful. There is hardly a sound as I write, I think the birds must be taking breakfast. We

find a bit of fire a comfort, for the morning is cool: there is a glow about the fire that reminds one of the past Winter, and we seem to have reached the dividing line between the old frosts and the Summer glory of the hills. I found the woods full of lindera in my walks yesterday, every bush glowing with dust of stars; and the brooks were so clear, and the grass fresh on the margins, and the sand was like shifting grains of silver—as it lay in the deep, cool pools. I found some men fishing, and was glad that I did not have to do it: and I suppose they thought how foolish for a man to poke among dead roots and ferns. I have no doubt they pitied the ignorance that could not tell a perch from a sunfish. The boys are coming back to-day; some are back, and as full of saucy health as the robins. I think all the birds are glad, for the trees around the Monastery are full of song, and there was hardly a sound there Easter Day—they all came to the cabin for companionship. Mrs. McDonald says the "poor silly fules trust the laddies." The Cardinal has been so broken and swollen that I could not cross it, and I have not been in the bright fields beyond since the rain. It has kept me within a narrow bound, and I fret under the restraint. We always want what is beyond, and as it is possible for men to attain unto their ideals, why all will at last reach Heaven, though now infinitely beyond their grasp and ken. There is no repulsive sight in the things that reveal the death of last year's glorious life and strength. The dead leaves to-day are touched

with dew-drops so dashed with splendours that the eyes cannot look upon the brightness.

I have been going from time to time of late to talk with that worthy courteous gentleman at the express office, and the walk takes me across a little square of grass that used to be a lovely garden. It is all open to the public now; but years ago it lay deep in retirement, and there was no intrusion of the rude world on its beauty. I never cross there that memory does not give back the scent of lavender; and I forget the ceaseless throng of souls that care more for this world's wealth than for the Glory of God. I see again the long sunshiny days of June, and the purple lilies, and the corners of lunaria, and the soothing shadows, and the silence that echoes with the songs of the thrush. It's all gone, and with it just so much of Heaven is gone out of the lives of men. The shad-trees are in full blossom now, and I will send you some with this.

CXLIV.

May 1, 1900.

THE HILLS OF APRIL.

I climbed the hills to-day and worshiped there.
The million bluets flung their turquoise light:
The million wind-flowers stung the enraptured
sight:

God's Garden—Eden—lives again, as fair.
Health vivifies this resurrection air:
God's voice is in the winds that surge the height:
His Presence in the flower-strewn aisles and white;
His Heaven drifts round and blinds with splendours rare.
I feel that Life's transfigured. Earth sinks down.
I climb to heights foreshadowings of The Crown.
The bursting woods with rainbow light are stained—
A new apocalypse of colour. I have gained,
By toiling up the steeps, the Patmos Vision:
The clouds are torn from off That Life Elysian.

CXLV.

May 2, 1900.

I spent yesterday, May Day, in the great cathedral of the hills, Wallie. In every place where the snowflakes whirled two months ago, to-day there is no end of blossoms. The bluets have fulfilled the prophecies—and no power, nor genius, nor inspiration of men has ever given any glorious temple a floor of such enameled mosaic-work. As I reached Brow-wait, the wind pulled out every stop of the mighty organ of the woods, and rolled over the hills in a great deluge of music. In the air that quivered and flashed with dust of stars, the bees made songs that oppressed me with their sweet sleepiness. The hills that were solid walls of blackness and ice, so short a time since, are softened now into

a mist of light—a great impalpable veil of green and gold melting into mystery: you can't help the feeling that it may vanish out of sight as you look upon it. I sat where the polypodium ferns made towers of living rock; and the aspidium that we are so glad to call the Christmas fern, the lovely evergreen that heard last December's Gloria in Excelsis and looked with its adoring beauty into the face of That Child—this fern I sat and watched, and its fronds unfolded visibly, like rolls of prophecy burning with all the majesty and the splendour of summer. I did not know that the Abbot was near until roused by his "Benedicite." I walked with him to the Monastery, and saw Mrs. Bruce and the boys. They were kicking a foot-ball—the boys, I mean —and I am sure that they have energy enough to lift their day and generation upward. I went with the Abbot into the library, and while a hearth-fire crooned snatches of a last-Winter's song, we sipped a cup of Mrs. Bruce's delicious coffee as we looked out on the lawns all pink with peach blossoms. I contrast the ice-freighted limbs of March with the soft melting haze of colour to-day. The bees are thick among them, and their æolian-like strains are tinctured with honey. They are the loveliest pink in the world, and as I look at them, they sink into my very life-depths and sting me with a buoyancy of youth. We all enjoyed your week with us more than I can express; but you are gone now, and the dear Kimball boys are gone, and whether I be lonely or not—well, I will go out and see what the dear bluets have to say about it.

CXLVI.

May 3, 1900.

The wood's cathedral floors are bright
With bluets—dust of stars.
Spring makes a progress through the world
And veils its waste of scars.

"Hosanna!" Cry the awakened trees,
And wave their snowy palms.
Hosannas from the Arbutus breathe
Through all the woodland balms.

Where snowflakes swathed the world in death,
The flowers now hold their court,
So human suffering yields to palms:
Man's anguish time is short.

I saw a bit of note-paper float from a young man's hand, as he walked ahead of me on the Way of the Winds, and on it were written the words that begin this note. I handed it to him, on overtaking him, and he asked me to read his verses. He is one of the young men of the school, and has just returned from home where he was kept a prisoner long weeks from typhoid fever. Philip has been his friend and greatly interested in him, taking him into his own house where he will remain until the close of the term. He called himself well, but he looks as frail as the anemones that fill all the russet avenues. He is a lover of the woods, though, and a tongue of the far-off

Fire of Pentecost has inspired his heart and his pen. His poem quivers with the music of Spring, like the dreamy hills all round with the pulses of the new year's heat. I sat with him on a fallen tree, and he seemed made of such fine mould, as the peach blossoms showered round him the onyx of their soft loveliness. I trust that his life will never turn the Hosannas into "Crucify!" There is, too, a quiet strength about him that makes me believe he will cut down palm branches from his spiritual victories and strew them in the Way of The Christ's triumphal march. It was so restful among the birds, and the carols of the brook, and the turquoise-emerald mist of the bluets, and the pink buds of the oaks that have taken the place of the leagues of russet fire that made the wide amphitheatre of the hills seem so warm through all the cyclone rage of the storms. The sunshine on the grey trunks made fringes of light that touched the nerves with restfulness, and the new grass with its dandelions seemed like velvet pinned to the earth by knots of gold. I hope you will like the poem: and on Sunday you will meet its author, Clarence King.

CXLVII.

May 4, 1900.

The thunders crashed among the hills last night, Wallie, and the terrible lightnings wrote on the blackness that the realm of the Winter has been given to the victorious Summer. What a weird

fascination there was in the scene! The trees tossed in the furious wind, and their blossoms whirled like the lost souls in Dante's vision. Ghosts danced on the foaming waters of Cardinal Brook, and the rocks of Polypodium Ferns blazed with fire from the clouds. All night long the storm shrieked at the windows, and the branches of the hemlocks beat upon the roof. This morning, though, that voice of old has commanded "a great calm," and all the cyclone fury has gone out of Nature's heart. Nothing but the dreamy loveliness that early blossoming May gives unto the world. We have an hearth-fire, and it is a Winter-time of falling blossoms. The lawn is strewn with white flowers from the shad bloom and the cherry trees; and, in the chill, we wrap our cloaks about us, finding the fire a delicious bit of comfort for an hour. Your new acquaintance—the woodman—had a wonderful walk, with the Bluets on every side showing him all the glory of Heaven. For my walk I went down to the express office again and had a talk on ferns with my friend the agent there. The old garden of which I told you was being used for a ball field, and I hurried on—it seemed a desecration. It was sold for an enormous sum of money, I know, and its value has increased; but it is a time when the trusts fatten, and monopoly strengthens, and pocketbooks are stuffed, and the Eagles of the United States' mint scream to besotted worldlings: "Behold your God!" On my way back I sat and listened to the cow-bells, and the Dogwoods above me were softening their hard black knots into white shining crosses for the Ascen-

sion-tide. Near Convallaria's old cabin a robin blathered over a Pyrus Japonica. I think that the red blossoms and the red-breast drew each other.

CXLVIII.

May 10, 1900.

THE LOSS OF THE FIRST FLOWERS.

A threnody sobs on the air
For days that could not last.
A minor fills May's chords of song.
The earliest flowers have passed.

The soft Hepaticas are gone,
The Arbutus bloom is shed,
The blood-root shone its transient hour—
The woods mourn for their dead.

They stood like angels 'mong the hills,
The shad-flowers scattering light;
The splendour all is past; to Heaven
Their ghosts have taken flight.

Take courage! Spring will break again
From Winter's waste and rack.
And Man who yearns for perished youth
Will get lost Eden back.

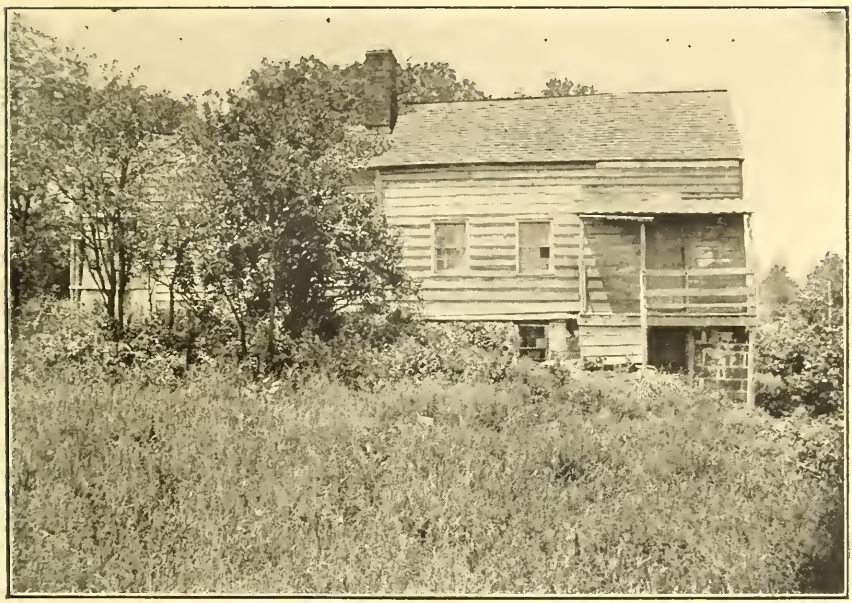
I told Clarence what you said about the falling shad-flowers, and he put it into verse, as above, while he sat with me at Monksrest among the many graves of blossoms. We had

just returned from the acres of Calthas that burnish the swamp—not with the gold that makes men brutish, but the spiritual gold that purifies and exalts and transfigures life. The shad-flowers were like visions of Angels, indeed, through all the hills, just as the lad has written; but right above where we sit, their pink and grey satin leaves unfold in the sunshine, so beautiful and soft in their radiance. The lad by my side knows nothing about lost youth: but oh, it is so eloquent of meaning to me who am on my way to the Winter Solstice. One would have no knowledge of perished youth—its loveliness and enthusiasm and strength and splendour, without the weight of years. I take it, though, that the very yearning is a prophecy: we will get back that which gives the Hepaticas their loveliness, that which we love with a feeling akin to worship in the porous, light-absorbing petals of the daffodils. Ah, me! the million wrinkles and the parchment-shrivelled face! But Man shall wash in the Jordan of Death, and his flesh shall come again like the flesh of a little child. The brook that carols at my feet, the oaks, the hills, the ledges of rock are strong in unchanging youth: it is this poor life of ours alone that is weighed down with infirmities. The old gardener of Monksrest is coming: he stops and has a kindly word with us. He is gone, but left a trail of fragrance, for he had an armful of carnations and daffodils. They thrilled me with their ineffable beauty, carried me up to the heights of a spiritual ecstasy. The lad sends his love.

CLXIX.

May 11, 1900.

Stephen Monroe came to Ageweight this morning, Wallie, and went into the kitchen for a moment to see Mrs. McDonald. He told her, as he left the store, that there was ice nearly a foot thick last night: and when she asked where, she dropped a milkpan in her astonishment—he answered that it was in his mother's refrigerator. Then he remembered suddenly that he must see the Master in the study: but the milkpan hurried after him to learn particulars, and it was exhilarating to hear the good madame laugh. I asked the lad if he were going to the Paris Exposition, and he answered no. He had read that the rates were $10 to $20 a day: and, as he could not and would not pay that amount of money and be wretched in a hotel, he would spend the Summer here among the hills environed round with all the Glory of Heaven. I went to Monksrest yesterday and spent an hour with the old gardener among the flowers. As we talked together, Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Livingstone came to get some carnations for a marriage. The little lad was with them and I gave him some chocolates. He then honoured me with his latest acquisition in learning, but got "Old King Cole" and "Bo-peep" mixed up, somewhat to the confusion of those two noted persons. His story ran:



Original by John DeCamp.

The Sentry-box at Monksrest.

"Old King Cole lost his merry old soul.
Let him alone and he'll come home
Dragging his soul behind him."

I told him that I never heard it rendered better: he had touched it with a stroke of genius. When they had gone on their way, the botanist gave me a box of those divine purple lilies—depths of colour, rich, soft and a very mystery of fragrance. They transfigure one. I picked up a Bible that the worthy man had on the table in his sentry box, and he said to me: "The Old Book begins and ends with a garden and the Tree of Life, and it is more precious to me every day. I've read it ever since you were here that morning last February, and in particular that first chapter of S. Luke with its fine picturing of the hill country of Judea. It is a great comfort for quiet hours." I asked him if he were ever lonely, and he spread his hands toward the wide stretches of glory and said: "Lonely with all that!" And his face was like one inspired.

CL.

May 14, 1900.

THE PINES AT MONKSREST.

We sat beneath the pines whose years
Embosomed centuries.
Their balsam fragrances were stirred
With soothing melodies.

The winds that swelled their breasts were those
  Æolian strains first heard,
When Earth was wrapped in swaddling clothes,
  At God's creative word.

Leagues, leagues of light all round: and hills—
  Green floods of shining seas,
Where blossoming woods sail bearing freight
  Of song from birds and bees.

O monarchs of the hills, engirt
  With glorious strength and life!
Ye teach the Eternal Health that reigns
  Beyond these years of strife.

I went out with Clarence King, Wallie, and as we sat under the old pines at Monksrest, the gift of song stirred him, and he put on paper what I have written above. He is getting well fast, and the pallor will soon be overspread with the ruddy bronze of health. We sat long time and gazed upon that impalpable sea to the south, where sunbeams and clouds of blossoms and choirs of bees drifted on the splendours of quivering light. We went down into Whippoorwill Glen and found the purple clematis in blossom, running all over the young lindens and the birches. Then we went into the old gardener's "vigil box," and after a kindly word he invited us out among his flowers. The tulips were a clearer brilliancy from contrast of apple blossoms all round the sacred retreat, and all the healing air was mellifluent with fragrances. And the bluets! Dear blessed bluets dashing light, and harmonizing with the russet and the columbines

and the grey rocks and the mosses! There are no discords in Nature. It was hard to leave, and the boy himself found it so, for I had told him that a month hence the whippoorwills will make all the wild crags a very Via Dolorosa of songs in the hush. O bird, bird, into thy soul sang Chaos and Old Night! As we passed the Cleft Rock, returning, the dear Abbot sat among the ferns, asleep in the quivering drowsiness, and the columbines nodded with him from sympathy. I know they were glad to have him there. We met Laurence Kent in the Glen, and walked with him to his home for an hour. He said he heard a whippoorwill last night for the first time while he was sitting with Harry in his little Summer-house under the crags.

CLI.

May 15, 1900.

I heard a knock at my window at 3 this morning, Wallie. At first I thought it must be the wind among the apple blossoms, but it was Stephen Monroe who wanted me to go with him to Monksrest by the light of the stars. I went with him, of course; and there, where the grass was heavy with dew that was crimson with the first flush of the east, we built a fire and made a cup of coffee. As far as our eyes could reach, the woods were shadowy with wild-flowers, and sweet from the lilacs planted on the rocks—oh, so long ago. I thought how many times you and I had lain there in the scent of

cinnamon roses in the sunsets of June, waiting for the dusk to fill all the woods with the songs of whippoorwills. The dear bird! Its plaint is as pitiful as a child's sorrow. There was a heavy hush on the air, and night was slumbrous in the valley, and the youth of the coming day made wild racings through my blood. How soft the pale smoke that gave wings to the fire and carried it up to the paling stars! We drank our coffee, and started back to the cabin where the robins were heralding the sunrise with songs, and waking the world from sleep. I wish you could come here and lie on the rocks that are as old as chaos: you would soon dream yourself unto a perfect rest. Convallaria found a pink orchid, and will save it for you—a beautiful pale onyx. I was at the Monastery for Evensong yesterday, and the Altar blossomed with the strong purple of the wild clematis like the blossom that we found last Sunday. We have found it warm these last few days; "presperous," our dusky friends in Florida would say. July came to pay his respects to the Queen. I trust he will not prolong his stay; we would not have the tulips stricken while they stand in worship, swinging their censers of spiritual fire. The apple blossoms, too, would think it harvest time.

CLII.

MAY 16, 1900.

July has gone back again, Wallie, and May is just herself and nothing more. Had the old Monarch of the Tropics staid longer, I fear the

Queen had lost her throne. It is cool again, and the cabin doors and the windows are all open—we would not lose a breath of the fragrances. The woods are all luminous with dogwood blossoms now, and all the mountain avenues are snow white from apple blossoms, just as we said last February when weary of the snow. The porch toward Caltha Swamp hangs heavy with the purple clusters of wistaria, and the air is filled with the odours and the dreamy songs of the bees. The incorporeal life feasts on a spiritual vintage. After this little talk with you, I am going out into Caltha Swamp, for I know that the pink moccasins are waiting for my homage, and the swamp all this side is just one vast stretch of pink and white azaleas. Convallaria has gone down to her old cabin for tulips. Halle Seton is with her, and has a basket full. He holds them towards me, and the sun lights up their polished black centres and shines through their crimson enamellings. Mrs. McDonald sits on the porch, jabbering back at the ducks, and I know that they understand it, every word. Mully is munching clover blossoms, and the dogs are watching her. They ask her Devonshire ladyship whether it be a quid or a cud that gives her such intense satisfaction. And her reply shows that she is not in the mood to discuss metaphysical subtleties. She answers them that she is no cynic. I wonder if the canines have any idea that Cynic Philosophy has reference to themselves? The Master sits looking on, the last number of "The Fern Bulletin" in his hand: but he is not mindful of its claims

just now—the dogs are demanding an audience. I suppose they want to have him decide the question of the Cynic Philosophy. Philip and Harold are home for the day, and to-night they and Harry and Laurence Kent and the two Kimball boys who are coming on the 3:30 P. M. train for that express purpose, all are going for a couple of hours to Monksrest to hear the whippoorwills. Mrs. Gardener prepares the lunch, and I am to provide a couple of lanterns. "twa good lichts," Mrs. McDonald calls them. Can you not go with us?

CLIII.

MAY 17, 1900.

We all went to Monksrest last night, Wallie, as I told you in my letter yesterday, and stayed there two hours in the haunts of the whippoorwills. Night came from Atropos, and closed the book of the bright day with the seal of the sunset; and then from the battlements of the dusk, the weird minstrels put into song the mystery of the glistening dew-drops that lay on the grass like sheets of some far-off heavenly music.

The hills are full of the scent of blossoms this morning, and all the house is open, that we lose none of the odours. I wish they could be poured into every stuffy mill and office and factory, and men would then lift up their hearts a "sursum corda" in which Earth would count for less in their lives—the sordid Earth, I mean. The effect

of fragrance is so pronounced on our lives: I can understand the Scripture which says that God smelled the savour of Noah's sacrifice, and then gave the regenerated world a blessing.

A very touching and beautiful thing has just occurred here at the cabin: a carriage drove up, and an old gentleman and his wife alighted and came and knelt before the Master of Ageweight for his blessing on their Fiftieth Wedding Day. He was a man of three score and ten and more when they first stood at God's Altar in their strength and loveliness half a century ago. He put a heavy ring upon the fourth finger of her left hand to replace the first that was worn unto the veriest thread; and when they drove away, they carried with them a box of bride roses in a perfection of beauty that they themselves had not lost. I wish you could see a bed of white violets that I found yesterday; the year has breathed into the snowflakes the breath of life and made them living souls. I found also a bed of senecio, and the dim corridors of the woods were filled with its golden light. How restful the depths of the shadows now! And broken only by the notes of the thrush that melt and tell that this is the year of jubilee. There is a scent of mint on the waters of the songful brook to-day, and the robin tastes critically. I think he remembers his all-Winter debauch on the China berries in the swamps of Florida. He does not believe in total abstinence. The cabin all send love to you, and the woods have their old blessing for you.

CLIV.

MAY 21, 1900.

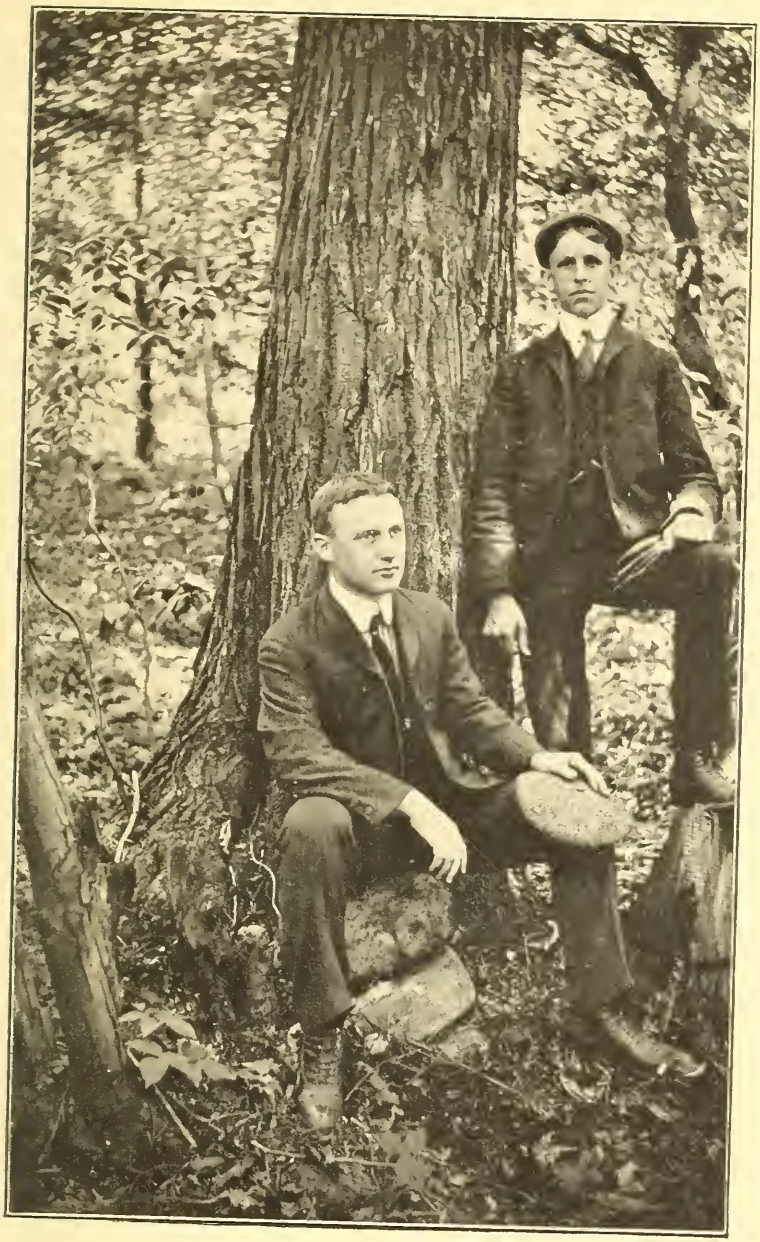
THE WHEAT-FIELDS.

Night in her moon-beam chariot has fled,
Æolian harp-strings tell of coming day.
The oldest music of the world doth play
On wheat-fields with their harvest gold o'er-spread.
Prescient with thought of Eucharistic Bread,
Each heavy head of grain doth bend and sway
In adoration of the Agnus Dei
On Whom The Church long ages blest has fed.
The sun is risen! The fields are flushed with light:
The sunbeams swing their censers from the height:
The world's great heart, in every quivering chord,
Is tuned to Christ by all the Heavens adored.
These fields, transfigured with the golden grain,
Foretell all souls transfigured. Christ shall reign!

CLV.

MAY 22, 1900.

The sun is started again on the great journey, Wallie, and the clouds scatter splendours round. How full the world of beauty and gladness and joy and health! The thrushes and the robins sing as if there were no sickness, as if there could be none. In all Nature there is not a grave: last year's leaves have none, and the fallen



Original by John DeCamp.

STEPHEN MONROE AND HARRY PHILLIPS.

tree of the forest is covered with living moss and lichens. There is no sorrow in the song of the brook, as I stoop and dip my hands into its shining music: and the world all round is prophetic of the time when men shall remember no more the anguish—and that will be Heaven. The cabin is all open—every door and window: and our ears—not only our ears but our inmost souls—are filled with the songs of the birds. We breathe the songs: there is a spiritual fragrance. A crow came yesterday to see if the corn had sprouted, but found some in a pan, and made up his mind that he would not start gardening; and we are more than satisfied with his decision. Some three years ago to-day, I paused at a cottage to feast the rapt nerves of colour with the purple lilies that blossomed there, and a woman of great age—wearing the century mark—sat in the porch and invited me within. I talked with her of the glorious Life Above for which she longed, and she said to me: "It is 75 years to-day since I was married, and all whom I loved are there in the World Beyond." I passed again to-day, and her cottage is closed. She has passed from all these infirmities unto the Health that fails not; she is with her own: she has looked upon the dear Christ's face, and there are no more tears. Am just in from a walk with Stephen and Harry. We went to hear Mrs. Elliot sing "The Palms," and to see her perennial poppies—a blaze of sunrise and ebony. While resting in the green velvet of the grass, Harry cribbed "The Merchant of Venice" from Stephen's pocket, and, as he read, a crow sat in the

hemlock overhead and listened with rapt attention. I think he was interested in that "pound of flesh." We are going to-night to Monksrest to hear the whippoorwills.

CLVI.

May 24, 1900.—Ascension Day.

As I neared Brow-wait this morning, Wallie, I smelled that delicious smell of burning leaves. The Monastery boys were there to welcome me, and escort me to an Ascension Day picnic on Mrs. Anderson's lawn. Mrs. McDonald was there ahead of us, Mrs. Monroe and Stephen were there, and the two Kimball boys who are spending the day with us. The Master and Convallaria in the phaeton, came, for a while, an hour later. Harry, too, was there: but Philip, Herbert and Harold were busy with examinations. Mrs. McDonald brought "Kate Carnegie," the book that Herbert gave her Christmas, and we sat in the porch, and I read to the ladies and some of the boys who were interested. I read in particular Mrs. Cameron's estimate of "Donald's" veracity. And where could one find a bit of humour more delicate and entertaining? Some of the boys played tennis on the lawn, and Harry headed another party that went to Monksrest to see the purple clematis. It is the only place where I ever found it. They, too, found it, but it is late for it now. We ate our strawberries and cream, and then Mrs. Anderson brought out some china, so thin it seemed

like gossamer; and there on the verge of the deep woods we made a pot of coffee, and you know that no coffee is better than that made out of doors. The crows cawed their satisfaction; and a friendly squirrel sat near, and feasted on an English walnut that Stephen threw him. In the subdued light on the ledges of rock above the house, the columbines burned. All the fire of sunrise seemed drawn there, and I found it hard to get away from their glorious presence. They held more of the Glory of God than all the inspired canvasses of the painters of all time. The first Mass to-day was at 6, so that men on their way to work might kneel unto Him for strength: the incense from the Altar mingling with the odours from the old gardens there, and the booming of the bells and the sobbing circles of their cadences melted away unto the velvety haze of the far-off mountains that look so much like the immeasurable stretches of the sea. We are all at home, now, and Mrs. McDonald is getting an omelette and some sandwiches ready. We brought good appetites from the woods where we enjoyed a perfect Summer day. The sun was hot, and we were glad at times to get into the shade of those old sugar maples.

CLVII.

May 25, 1900.

The Kimball boys have gone back to school, Wallie, and it seems just a bit lonely after their dash and energy and restless youth. The morn-

ing is dark, and the shadows are heavy in all the glens, and that helps us to miss the boys. Wherever we look the dogwoods are a startling flash of white. The brook says there will be rain. I was out in the first hush of the day to have a talk with it, and extended my walk to the Brakes and Warrior Rock and the way of the Perpetual Silences. The rocks there seem so much older than in other parts of the mountains; they have all the scars of Eternity on their hammered faces. The echoes there have such ghostly voices. The unbroken twilight is a faint commingling of green and pale sunshine, and there is a sob in the wind as of spirits that rest not. I breathe more freely when I leave the place. I stood a long time yesterday in a perfect wilderness of Dicksonia ferns, thinking of the bow like unto an emerald in S. John's description of Heaven. It means that through the Might of The Gospel, Heaven shall at last transfigure the Earth, and the Earth shall reflect its splendours—There. The old Apostle had lived a hundred years among the hills, and they had inspired him with the largest hope for Men—a salvation as broad and as wholesome as the blue. A last columbine burns high on the ledge of rocks above the south porch, and a crow comes and sits by its fire to learn a new song that he intends for your welcome to the hills next Sunday morning. The ducks listen with courtesy, but I know from their expression that they think him utterly lacking in talent. Philip sent Mrs. McDonald a case of Scotch whiskey, and she—well, she was not sorry. After a half min-

ute of insistence, she said to me: "Well, if ye are so determined, I micht as weel taste it."

And she did, the good mother! "Ah, that is the very air of Edenburgh!" she answered my inquiring look; and then, thinking of his diploma next month, she added: "Here's to the health of Dr. Philip Ageweicht." She is always more Scotch when animated. A bottle is wrapped in a Stuart plaid, and it will find its way into your hands when you come next Sunday. A letter has just come from Herbert.

CLVIII.

May 29, 1900.

The morning is cool, Wallie, and Cardinal Brook runs close to the moss and the ferns to keep warm. How those fine ostrich ferns suggest a perpetual Palm Sunday; and how the pink moccasin-flowers hallow the woods with their frail loveliness! I am sure that they say a prayer for the departed red men. Their campfires are burnt-out ashes, never more to be fanned into life—but the breasts of the warriors themselves burn with the Lightnings of the Godhead there in the World to Come. The orchid that bears the red man's name is better known than his arrows, for civilization has reached a higher cycle, and it is the reign of the Prince of Peace. The Kimball boys are coming to spend Memorial Day with us, and have promised their mother that they will bring her some of

the wonderful blossoms on their return. The distances are all hidden now, submerged by the deluge of green leaves that has rolled over the world from the Eternal opulence of Summer. You can't see the Monastery towers, and the songs of the thrush are heard above the voices of the boys of the school. The first Jacqueminot roses burn in the garden to-day, and the ledges that hang above the green-houses are all hidden with campanulas—the old rocks are incarnate in the sapphire of heaven. Harry Phillips and Clarence King and Laurence Kent are going out with me among them after this note, and I am to read Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture" aloud. It will hallow their young lives to hear the words of this old apostle, who has climbed so far into the Light. The lawn is white with Summer snow from the dogwoods, and the trees themselves whose blossoms will whiten the graves of warriors to-morrow, lo, they tell that there are no graves in the Glory where the warriors reign! Just now a carriage drove to the door, and a woman, heavy with the weight of years and wearing the vesture of one who has long time mourned for the dead, asked to see the Master. Her shrunken face showed that the tide of life has ebbed out unto the vast ocean of To-morrow. The roar of The Jordan is in her ears: but the light on her dear face is the reflection of the white lilies on the Other Shore. For forty years she has come for roses for her dead boy who was killed the first year of the war, and part of the roses which the Master has just given her were from a bush that

the dear lad gave him the Spring before he gave his young life for his country. The Master sent her on her way with Peace.

CLIX.

May 31, 1900.

The hills are wrapt in quivering purple heat this morning, Wallie—the substance that dreams are made of sleeps in the far-off haze. The sweeping elms dip their branches in the steam of pearl and gold, and the trunks of the scarlet oaks are black with moisture. Robins fill all the silences with their clarion joy, and the sunshine streams through the petals of the wild geraniums that fringe all the dim aisles of the woods with their loveliness. From the clouds the crows caw remembrances of early March, and the thrush sings measureless melodies. The hearts of the wrens gush with songs in the syringas; the wind stirs the leaves with the oldest music in the world: Cardinal Brook flashes down the glen with Benedicites in its verdurous course. The world is ready for the Summer that will come with to-morrow. The fireplace is drifted full of the snow of hawthorns—the burnt-out ashes of the Winter have sprung into these white blossoms of life. I went yesterday and took lunch with Mrs. Elliot, and on the table she had a vase of cinnamon fern blossoms that I sent her a day or two ago. I was so much pleased with her appreciation. The Abbot came and lunched quietly with the Master, and the fathers

with a number of the boys went down to the cemetery for the Memorial exercises. At 9 A. M. the veterans with drums and music and tattered flags drove by, and we all cheered them lustily. They in turn cheered the Master, and he stood with uncovered head while they were passing. How old and broken they looked! I felt a sob as I cheered them. At 6 P. M. the lads all came and had ice cream and strawberries in the kitchen, and staid with us till 8. Philip and Halle and Harry and the two Kimballs were of the party; and when we had finished, we all sang the Gloria in Excelsis, and closed the day with its sacred memories.

A robin is on the porch as I write, almost at my feet. He is making a breakfast from a strawberry that Mrs. McDonald threw him, and wipes his beak with a dainty claw, clattering and walloping round us, with now and again a delicious, quarrelsome song. I have been reading Ruskin to the Master, and put down the book after a glowing passage, to see what our red-breast friend will do. I think he wants another strawberry.

CLX.

JUNE 1, 1900.

The calendar travailed in the night, and June was born. June gives length of days and sits upon the throne of the Solstice. There is a scent of rain in the air this morning, Wallie, all through the quiet hills. As the wind stirs

the leaves, here and there a fragrant shining drop is seen, and Lady Thrush is using it for a looking-glass. I suppose she wishes to see whether her voice be up to concert pitch. And the pine tree wishes to know what the lovely singer's voice has to do with "pitch." Cardinal Brook reflects the hawkweed on its still waters to-day, and the gold of the pine balsams drifts there. How soft the shadows make the old rocks appear! Where a week ago the columbines glowed like a blacksmith's forge, there the dainty campanula rings its bells, and calls us unto a new song of "Jubilate Deo." A shaft of sunlight shoots from the clouds and breaks in splendour on the waters near my seat—I am at Breakfast Rock—and it reveals a shadowy moth drifting over the stream, and shaking from its wings a fine dust of gold. Just here came the rush of many feet—the boys of the school going over to the Monroes to enjoy a strawberry shortcake. They will get all they expect and more: and so it will be in the end of life with them and you and me and all men. I looked on their fine faces and glowing eyes and kindling excitement, and thought how sad it is that so many lives make shipwreck of their glorious power. They take the thirty seconds of indulgence, and their God is crucified! That Father grieves. I wonder how many ever think that God sorrows! The world that should have touched the hem of their Manhood's strength and been made whole, alas! it goes on in its curse of moral leprosy. But That Grand Christ said if He were lifted up from the Earth, He would draw all Mankind

unto Himself, and for that we must work and pray and wait.

I met Laurence Kent on my way home: he was returning from a call on the old botanist of Monksrest, and had an armful of Marechal roses. He asked the gardener if the vexations of life ever break through his calm and steady patience, and his answer was: "If I feel myself inclined to impatience and hasty words, I go out among the columbines and the bluets, and they immediately restore me to my truer self."

CLXI.

JUNE 4, 1900.

It is cold this morning, Wallie, and a fire on the hearth gives cheer and comfort. It burns, too, with energy, as if the frosts of January were at the door. The glowing coals are so pleasant to look on, and a luxury to feel, with the wind in the north. The doors and the windows are all open, though, and the air is sweet from locust blossoms, and just quivering with the songs of bobolinks and thrushes. I heard the milkman go over the flowery avenue at 3 this morning. A star or two stood in their tent doors and watched, and the sleepy blackberry-hedges shook down their blossoms. In the first hush of the dawn, I am conscious of a feeling that comes at no other time. It passes with the stars, but all through the hours of work, I find myself yearning for something lost. The story of Eden is new every morning. I went out with

Stephen Monroe at 4, and we built a fire on the rocks, and stood over it, and inhaled the soft smoke, and enjoyed the blaze and the heat. The lad sang, and waked, oh, such a chorus of birds—the woods just throbbed with the music, and then a whippoorwill broke a minor chord on the hush. I am out again, down near Convallaria's cabin, watching the birds on the distant fields of waving grass, as they dip into the cool, green surf. I see, too, not far away, a young father out in the intoxicating balm and incense of the morning, holding his heir asleep in his arms. The little lad has never seen a June before. A sunbeam just fell at his wee feet, and paused to compare his own glory with the babe's radiant hair. I am going over to talk with him—I see he is waking up—"for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." I wish you could see the purple lilies in the Monastery gardens.

It is now 10 P. M., Wallie. I am just in from Monksrest where I went at 6 to hear the whippoorwills. I sometimes think it is not a bird at all, but the mystery of silence given speech. The sunset fire threw flakes of gold through the luminous woods; and, though so late in the season, a bluet or a saxifraga blossom or an anemone, here and there, glorified the path with its frail loveliness. I built a fire, and sought shelter from the wind that raged and dashed and screeched, and then fell to whispering lullabies. And during the intervals, the weird recluses sang songs as old as the night. I feel a buoyancy, a freshness, an exhilaration from the remembrance, quickening the current of the blood

with the pulse-beat of a new vigour that passed away with youth. It is all come back again. I stayed until dark and left with regret—there were yearnings in the fire that bade me stay with them, and the flames were so rich and soft against the gloom that nestled beneath the oaks and the viburnums. I turned and looked back, again and again, and wondered if the spirits of the red men would come and find a council-fire kindled for them. The fire-flies held torches along the path, as I returned—the night thickened so fast. And the blackberry blossoms, how they towered in shinings all along the way! They are so white, a spotless white, by day: but a ghostly phosphorescent splendour as the light flashes on them in the blackness. I hold my breath lest they vanish as I look on them. They are of such exquisite softness and radiance, a fabric like the clouds. I wonder whether they bring the past day's winding-sheet or the new day's swaddling clothes. I think, too, they are streaked with gold—they are so lustrous; long racemes of incandescent light, swaying in the blackness and filling the silence thick, as I stand among them, listening to our bird's soft, soothing, plaintive melodies.

CLXII.

JUNE 5, 1900.

I went to Mass to-day, Tuesday, in Whitsun-Week, Wallie, and then spent an hour with the Abbot in his study. We had the cup of coffee,

of course. Am just back to the cabin; and as I take my seat, a crow alights in Caltha Swamp. He is just far enough away for his notes to be soft and musical. How it suggests early March, and the passing of Winter, and the first warm days, and the new, vigourous life of the year! Dear bird, I love him all through the year, and never hear him without feeling the surge of a stronger optimism. I went to the Monastery and talked to the boys a while yesterday, and told them some of the legends of the old hills. We sat in the garden—the air full of spicy fragrances from the wild cherry blossoms that were snowing everywhere. Peonies were in blossom, locusts hung their clusters of white grapes from the boughs, hawthorns were as thick as stars, and daisies white on the distant fields—like the Milky Way. The roses burned with the Fires of Pentecost, and the air was filled with their new revelation from On High. A whole year's preparation for this one week of splendour! One of the lads asked me about Cleft Rock, and I told him the story: how one of the first settlers here on the hills asked an old Indian how it became rent: and, pointing to the rude wooden Cross that he wore, he answered: "It was done on the Day of the Death of God." The rocks of the mountain heights testified their allegiance to The Rock of Ages, whose Heart was smitten to smite the stone hearts of men. After my talk with the boys, I went in to see Mrs. Bruce, and stood over her delightful kitchen-fire, for it was cold. And after that, Harry Phillips took me home to eat strawberries with him.

CLXIII.

JUNE 7, 1900.

The hills are filled with fragrances, Wallie, and in the slumbrous shade the night lingers to see what the day is like. The same vast calm and silence and mystery; Life is transfigured by their power. As a lad goes over the path from Breakfast Rock to the rails of the old fence in Caltha Swamp, he sings out of the fullness of his glad, young life, and I listen—forgetting everything else for the moment—for it shows that in his conception of this glorious life, there are no tired minds and bodies, no wasting unto age, no sickness, nor tolling bells, nor dust to dust. All is glorious strength. No hateful voices of experience cry: "Take care!" The flush of the apple blossoms is on all that the lad thinks of. He is in the full beauty of his untouched Garden. There are no lightning-flashes of conscience on the night, with: "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" The dear, untroubled youth! How his very unconscious influence brightens the life that is weary from its weight of years! The sin-stained, crushed and filthy race will be restored to the strength and the loveliness of character that were lost. I know it every time I look into an honest boy's face. O poor wretched World, but not lost, the wide stretches of Memory shall again blossom thick with wild-flowers, and in every glen the blood-roots will spread the shinings of Heaven

untouched by the shadows of temptation! Mrs. McDonald stands in the porch as I write, listening to a cat-bird, and I just heard her say: "A fine blather, the bonny hen!" She put out a dish of cherries yesterday and forgot them, and the robins ate every one. I wish you could have seen her shake the dish at them, saying: "Now, may God forgive you for thieves!" Jamie is proud of his garden; this last week his peas have been sheets of white butterflies, and he has promised to bring them to the table for the Festival of S. John Baptist. I have no doubt that he will do it. He sits resting now—"the Man with the hoe"—in the shadowy blossoms of the lunaria and the soothings of their lilac beauty. The whippoorwills fill all the glens these nights.

CLXIV.

9:30 P. M., JUNE 12, 1900.

I am just in from another trip to Monksrest. Harry met me on the long avenue. I found him at 7, in the green-and-crimson gold of the twilight waiting on our old chestnut seat. As we climbed the hills, the sunset shone through last year's russet leaves and made them such a depth of living red: and I know that in the sunset of our lives the extreme hour will pour the transfusion of its splendours through all the Past and make it glorious—stamped with His Likeness. On reaching the summit, we built a fire, and fought mosquitoes, and enjoyed a box of

butternuts that we took with us. It was a bit tiresome for him, though his fine courtesy would not allow him to show it; and, moreover, the mosquitoes showed a decided preference for the younger blood. I told him it is because they like railroad stock better than theology. The whippoorwills came close to us this time: we saw them for the first, and one that flitted to and fro on the crest told his weird, soft strain—I counted—250 times. It seemed to increase in volume and richness, as I listened—a passionate, hopeful sorrow. A messenger from Atropos, perchance, but a thrill of optimism is felt back of its strange foreboding. It tells that "Joy cometh in the morning." We called on the old gardener, and he showed us his roses—a pale, creamy gold and the whole greenhouse spicy from their fragrances. Then he walked with us to the ruined house, and in the cellar that lay all exposed to the sky, a great clump of elder-berry bushes grew, heavy and white and sweet with blossoms. "It is the true way to have wine in the cellar," said the old man: and I thought how the birds in the ripeness of the Summer will celebrate the vintage, no drunkenness and debauchery, but innocency and thanksgiving. Harry said to the old student: "Do you ever weary of the life here?" And as he answered no, he seemed saturated, through and through, with all that infinite riches of Glory. Good-night; my pen is sleepy.

Original by Ambrose Askew.

Glen of the Whippoorwills.

CLXV.

JUNE 14, 1900.

After my note to you yesterday, Wallie, a message came to me from the Monastery, asking me to take some Mission work for a couple of months. I consented, so here I am in Scarbourn, miles away from the hills that I love more than life, and I hardly need tell you that I am homesick. It was one of those calls that a man feels he must not refuse, though every feeling protest. It is night. I hear the surge of the thick woods; and above, a few stars burn in the fire-mingled haze. I am alone in this holy house; alone in my study—a rocking chair, a large Smyrna rug, a desk, and a light in an old silver candle-stick. The windows are all open, and I hear the whippoorwills: dear things, it is the one sweet thing that reminds me of home, and comforts me. They have stopped singing, and now an occasional owl reminds me that he, too, is keeping vigil. Since a supper of strawberries and toast and a cup of coffee, I have been reading the only thing that I could lay my hands on—a volume of Keats. I think you will know right off that I have read "S. Agnes' Eve" and the "Ode to a Nightingale"—the two immortal poems that you and I always read on S. Agnes' Eve, and feel the thrill, the fire, the passion of that deathless intellect, though the frail clay wasted unto nothingness ere he had reached the full splendour of youth. An owl has just hooted again, and I ask him if he remembers

the line—"The owl for all his feathers was acold." I hear the quiet step of the Mother Superior who has just placed a candle in my bed-chamber, and my drowsy eyes tell me it is best now to forget the world and go and dream of Ageweight and the hills. It is only in dreams that I shall see them for weeks to come. Good-night.

CLXVI.

JUNE 15, 1900.

My first day of Patmos is ended, and I sit alone in my study. Patmos, I call it; but S. John found Patmos near to Heaven. The lawn this morning was full of robins, and in the porch the wrens sang incessantly. The woods all day have been noisy with crows. I wish you could have heard them. After my work among the poor sick folk I came home and went all over the place. To my great delight, I found an old stone wall full of Dicksonia ferns, their lovely silken fronds. I have some on my desk as I write, and a branch of ripe shad-berry. How it takes me back to that ramble when we found all the hills fringed with it! We have had strawberries three times to-day, great living melting coals of spiritual fire, concentrating all the essences of all the blossoms of the year—the delicious Brandywines. I feel that I am eating an immortal fruit that will repair all the waste and weakness of the years. I went to the spring a little while ago, and on my way back through

the calm woods an Italian woman met me, and said: "O, Padre, I am so glad you are back. I want you to baptize my babe." And it touched me deeply. I am so glad to have won the love of the poor. Oh, that delicious thrush, telling his sweet contentment! It is a prophecy of the peace that shall never be broken by the rage and dissonance of war. The sun has gone down into the fires that burn the west—the day is done: I see the tired folk going home from their work. In a little cottage across a field of grain I see a young mother hold her little one up to his father, who has just come from the mill, and his sweet cooing mingles with the scent of cinnamon roses that blossom where the glad father stands. The fire-flies remind me that it is time to light my candle.

CLXVII.

JUNE 25, 1900.

It is Monday morning, Wallie. I am out in the fields, under some old hickories, resting from a full Sunday of work, the work that I have always done, and such as is dear to a Priest's heart. After a day whose remembrance is like a furnace blast, such a morning as this comes and dips a finger in the chalice of the dews, and cools the fevered pulse of life with balm and health. We are grateful, too, for the shade, where the shadows rest in the stillness, waiting for the night. I got your delightful letter, and with it came others from Mrs. McDonald, Halle,

Herbert and Harold. I am more interested in my work now, and it takes away some of the sting and pain of homesickness. I wonder, as I sit here, whether you went to the cabin yesterday, and whether Harry and Stephen were there, and what the dear folk at the Monastery were doing. I know you are all glad that Philip is home with his diploma. "We must give a dinner in his honour," says Mrs. McDonald; but I know she will wait the Priest's return. I told Philip about Keats, and in his letter he said that he was reading it once in the woods, and an old farmer came along. He stopped, and at Philip's invitation took up the book and opened it at the "Ode to a Nightingale." He was silent some time, and his expression was that of a man who had tackled the toughest job of his life. Presently he handed it back, with: "Well, if he really owed it, why under heaven didn't he pay it and not die in debt?" I shall never read Keats again without thinking of our friend of the farm, and it will always bring a smile. I can hear Philip laugh even now. Across the road from where I sit a buttercup burns like a star, and the vast solitudes that surround me are thick with bird-song and worship. The chestnut trees in the woods begin to assume an individuality—it is nearing their time of blossoming. How the bees will sing among them at Monksrest! I shut my eyes, and their drowsy songs nearly put me to sleep. The mail brought me a package this morning, neatly and securely tied. On opening it I found a box of orchids, calopogons and pogonias, that Harold sent me from Connecti-

cut, where he had been spending a day or two. It has made me forget that I was tired. I am going to have a cherry-pie for dinner. Goodby.

CLXVIII.

JULY 4, 1900.

This morning I was up at 3:45: the cannons and the horns and the fire-crackers made sleep impossible. I went into the garden and read Matins in the hush, the fragrance, the expectancy of the coming day, and all round the robins carolled the Glorias. The shadows lay thick among the trees, and the air all fresh with dew was a strong draught of health. The pallor and the sleepiness of night lingered under the blossoming catalpas, though all the east glowed with a soft rose colour that deepened into the red gold of sunrise. Philip Ageweight came last night to spend the holiday with me quietly. It is now 5, and he has just joined me in the arbour, where the morning-glories are opening. He puts his face down into their purple depths and protests that they are fragrant. I agree with him, and have always wondered that so many think that they are not sweet at all.

9 P. M.

We are out in a little retreat overlooking the swamp, and have had our quiet day. He brought Scott's "Bride of Lammermoor" with him, hav-

ing read that Chauncey M. Depew pronounces it a book that every young man should know as a study in literature. We read it aloud all the morning, and after a lunch of raspberries and cream we went out into a new swamp that I have wished to explore ever since I came here. We found Sundews-Drosera in abundance, and, though late for them, there was an orchid here and there, calopogons and pogonias. It was a great joy to us both, and in the thrill of excitement we forgot that it was so warm. Returning, we went to our rooms and rested a while; and after our cup of coffee at 6, came out to enjoy the rockets. They hissed and rushed into the sky, and broke into splendour all round us, and then it was blacker than before. Ah, men themselves soar aloft like the rockets, but come down burnt sticks! And here I call to mind what Thoreau said of our aspirations: The *young* man gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or a palace or a temple on the earth; and at length the *middle-aged* man concludes to build a wood-shed with them. It is a true philosophy, and so many of us have found it so in our own practical experience.

CLXIX.

July 9, 1900.

Life and health and blessing to you this anniversary day, Wallie. I cannot be with you, except by the grace of my gold pen—with that I

must be satisfied. I am out in the fields; my day's work is done. The sun is in the west, and the splendour comes to me through the thick trees on the hills. Oh, these glorious days! The whole vast sky and air and woods and fields swell and beat and throb and quiver with the exuberance of bird life and song—incessant, joyous. Birds have nothing to minister to a world's pain and sorrow and disease—their only conception is glorious, everlasting health. I find, though, that these days are tiresome from two to six in the evening. The birds are hushed then, and the air burns. There are great wastes of smothering heat; it seems so long since the freshness of the morning; the nerves are tired, and the gift of youth that the morning gave is taken from me. A soft creamy whiteness of chestnut blossoms brightens the woods now, and has for the last week. I know they have fringed all the hills there at Ageweight and Monksrest, taking the place of the pink and white laurels that were so lovely when I came away here to Patmos; but S. John on his Patmos had visions and revelations of Heaven. I hear the leisurely brook; and on my return from some mission work today I left the hot sand of the road, and went and walked on the wet stones among the maiden-hair ferns and the soothing shadows of daffodil light. At one of the places where I called this morning, a devout woman was burning a candle for her little boy—the anniversary of his birthday into Eternal Life. She said: "It is another year nearer the Great Revelation, Father, and the tears will not be the tears of the old pain."

I told her that she will find her babe There: glorious with the manhood of Jesus Christ, and that this same dear Christ will send him in her own extreme hour to welcome her to the land where there are no graves. I had a letter to-day from Will Delaroche in California, and in it he tells me that he intends to spend October with us among the hills. The two Clark boys spent yesterday with me, and Clarence King is coming next week, to bring me a purple gloxinia.

CLXX.

July 18, 1900.

I was poking around in the attic one day last week when the rain kept me within doors, and, to my great delight, I found an old chest full of magazines. What a treasure of intellectual gold, and how much I have enjoyed their society! There are no grave-yards there: take up a magazine of 1883 and Tennyson is still living. I read my Matins this morning at 4:30, and the birds helped out the praise with their songs. All through Mass, too, they poured out their Glorias. There is a great wealth of blossoms round me. Dandelions and clovers are fresh on the lawns despite the fierce mid-summer heat: a hedge of sunflowers is heavy with odours of frankincense; a stubble-field near by is a very riot of evening Primroses—the soft yellow that carries the Spring's youth far into harvest-time. The pump-

kin blossoms make a blaze of orange on the garden fence, while the fields below me are all on fire with acres of cone-flowers. I sat last night and read my diary of these last twelve years, and it was like facing the Day of Judgment. I see pitiless Death take from a mother's breast the babe just old enough to lisp her name, and tears that waste the sight will not suffer us to see that the babe has grown unto the full stature of the Glorious Christ—There, on the Other Shore. Stop the funeral bells, and rejoice that there is not a stain of earth on his baby soul. Ah, me, what yearning! And the very yearning is proof that we shall all come together again in that Vast To-morrow. A young wife came to see me at noon. She has just come to this place, and everything is new and strange. We sat in the shaded porch, and as we ate a dish of cherry currants, she told me that she will try not to be too homesick. I talked with the very eloquence of sympathy for the poor child, for I yearn myself for the home that I cannot see till Fall. There came a respite from the sorrowing, though, to-day. Scarcely was the lady gone from me, when a buggy drove up the lane, and who had come but Stephen Monroe. "Get in, Father, I wish you to make a call with me." And after ten minutes we stopped at a cottage where Frank and Douglass Kimball and Clarence King have taken board until the first of September. It will be a precious month for us all. They had not told me.

CLXXI.

August 17, 1900.

There was an owl in the swamp last night, Wallie, and all the blackness throbbed with his cries. It comes to my mind so vividly at this moment—I am under the hickories close to the swamp, as I write, and the sharp twang of the locusts' songs fills the hot Summer air. As I sit here with letters in my hands—letters from Mrs. McDonald, Stephen, Halle, Harry and yourself —I recall that 30th of April last year, when you and I were on the mountains the first time that Spring. The little breakfast on the ledge of rock that was wet from the little silver brook back of the Monastery—I shut my eyes and it's all spread again. Even that long hot walk afterward, through the dust, gives no personal discomfort now, for it ended in that revelation of gold in Caltha Swamp. Were I as rich as the acres of golden-rod before me, I would give half a kingdom to see old Caltha Swamp today. A thunder-shower has just swept by to the north, whirling down some drops of rain and filling the fields with its flashings, for the sun shines on through it all. I go back to my musings, and the beauty of past Springs on the mountains has comforted me through all these long, hard weeks of work. Memory wafts to me over and over again, the soft, smoky light and the delicious scent of the burnt leaves of so many Aprils. I see again the earthquake-

torn rocks that have lost their vigour in nuturing the lovely white-hearts—dicentra, as frail as threads of gossamer. The last year's dead leaves, heaped in drifts through the woods, are a radiant bronze; and the piles of brush with their ragged bark, together with the dead branches that snap under foot, have almost a touch of the sky in their soft grey—they have lain under the open heavens so long. How many times we have stretched ourselves out on the chips where some old chestnut had fallen! The heat of the new year is quivering all round us, and clusters of sapphires glisten where the Hepaticas blossom under the protection of their guardian rocks. We listen, and old Indian River, wearing the thinnest girdle of new grass, is singing its Easter carols, and no other sound is heard save the voices of bees and birds joining to swell the chorus. Here we look up, and a vigourous dandelion standing in its doorway, is looking heavenward, and we veil our eyes before its splendour—it has looked on the sun so long. A short way off, a brilliancy of white arrests our eyes, as the wind scatters the petals of the blood-root. How wonderful! A whole year of preparation for just these few hours of loveliness: but their transient lives are long enough to teach men that they, too, can go back to God with the same whiteness of character. A voice here breaks my musings; one of the sisters has walked out to my retreat, and tells me that there are some old friends waiting at the house to see me, and I must say goodby. The time is short.

One more letter, and then I come back to the hills—Alleluia!

P.S.—Herbert and Harold have come to spend the night with me.

CLXXII.

September 1, 1900.

This is my last letter, Wallie: we close the house and the Summer work the 8th: Patmos is nearly finished. A new-born babe lies in the cradle of the year this morning. The World Mother calls it September, and old Father Time gives the little maid a robe of many colours. At 4 A. M. Venus was like a burning lotus blossom on the sea of the twilight: I stood long time looking at it, and from the garden drifted up to me the scent of ripening grapes—Concords and Madeiras.

September 5, 1900.

The wind is north to-day and cold. The windows are closed: it is pleasant to sit in the sunshine. The fierce heat and manhood of the year is past—just the calm, subdued strength of coming age: Translucent mists drift through the woods, showing how the scarlet hue of martyrdom has touched the leaves. I am going out after this with some twelve or fifteen of the girls of the mission who have been known as

"The Fern Club." We all have enjoyed it and pursued the study with enthusiasm, making some notable finds—the walking fern and the purple cliff brake being the chief. Some day, probably, the club may give the world a botanist. The boys, too, of the Mission have been organized—"The Club of Twenty-Two," and we have had readings every other evening from 7 to 8. "The Sunset Readings" they have called them. Last night we sat before a sweet dreamy hearth-fire and finished "Little Lord Fauntleroy." They have put their whole souls into it, and I trust it will help them to make their boyhood count. One of the lads sits with me now, and is reading Lew Wallace's "Boyhood of Christ," is quite lost in it. His name is Fred. Morton, and he has been with me all Summer, making Patmos Heaven, for, as Dickens said: "There is nothing on earth half so holy as the innocent face of a child," My parting word to the lad will be to say at all times, of every action: "Would the Boy Christ do this?" And when I go back again, I am sure he will have grown in the Divine Stature. The last Mass will be on S. Mary's Festival, the 8th, and then the Altar will be dismantled for another year. I look back and the work has given me great pleasure; I feel both pain and joy in closing it. I shall miss the children, and a little cottage in the woods where I have called many times—a very paradise of flowers, and where I have been received with great kindness by a mother and her children, all of whom I have baptized. Another cottage on the verge of the swamp has been girt round

with such abundance of red lilies—they will blossom in my memory through all the frosts of Winter: and another place, too, in the swamp, after my departure, will sting appreciative nerves with gleams of Cardinal-flower until the velvety gloom burn with its fires again. Well, the Fern Club is ready to go, and I find all the boys of "Twenty-two" are invited. They have promised to look for none but "The Lady Fern." The crows are calling; so—goodby.

CLXXIII.

SEPTEMBER 11, 1900.

I am at home again, Wallie. Philip and Halle met me at the Brier Knot station this morning at 9, and after stopping a moment at Philip's for a word of kindly greeting with his family, I came directly to the cabin. The Master and Mrs. McDonald and Stephen met me in the porch, and the good mother stretched out her arms with "The exile is finished!" I went the rounds—the library, the dining-room, the old kitchen, the green-house, the dogs, the ducks—the dear quacks! And then after an half hour in the hammock, Mrs. McDonald called us to lunch—toast, shredded wheat and cream, a dish of peaches and one of the finest water-melons. After lunch Stephen and I went out for a walk. I felt like stooping down and kissing the dear ground, when we reached Caltha Swamp, I had yearned for it so long. Cardinal Brook complained to me of the long drought, and well it

might—there was not a brook-song anywhere. I went and paid my deference to the Abbot and the other Monastery folk, and they all gave me a cordial welcome home. Mrs. Bruce insisted that I must sit in her little parlour and eat a peach: they were as large as teacups, a soft, red and creamy down of gold. Stephen left me, and I went back to the cabin alone. Oh, the hills and the woods and the old rocks are so precious! A curtain soft as purple lilies hangs before the mountains beyond Monksrest, and the million leaves of another passing Summer sing the choruses of the wind. Dittany is in blossom everywhere, and all the rocky avenues are red with the berries of the wild rose. I wish you could have sat and enjoyed the silvery sheen of the Woodsia ferns at Monksrest. On my reaching home, we sat in the shade, and the music of the birds, and the fluttering leaves, and the hot twang of the locusts. The Master reading an article in an old Harper's on John Bartram, the first American botanist: Convallaria did a bit of lace: Mrs. McDonald was in and out as her duties required: and thus it wore on unto sunset. The Monastery bells rang for Evensong, and I went. Mrs. McDonald said she could not leave, or she would go with me. Mr. and Mrs. Monroe were there and Stephen, Herbert, Harold and his mother, Philip and his sister and Harry Phillips—and they all came back with me. On reaching the cabin, we found Mr. and Mrs. Clark and Arthur, and the two Kimball boys who had just arrived. Mrs. McDonald was giving a dinner and I had not a suspicion of

it. Say that a woman can't keep a secret! I had seen her busy all the evening, and yet did not know, though the Master had smiled knowingly from time to time. The Abbot and Mrs. Bruce and Halle came a few minutes later, and we sat down at that table of many feasts. How beautiful and chaste and quiet it looked as the dining-room doors were thrown open! The great silver candle-sticks were lighted, and the linen and the silver shone like soft moonlight. The vases were filled with coreopsis, and at every place was a sprig of lavender and a half-blown rose. We had the first oysters of the season, and tomato soup, and a baked blue fish, and broiled chicken, a salad of tomatoes and celery, peach pie, peach cream, English walnuts and coffee. The dinner was in honour of Philip and Herbert, who came home in June with their diplomas, and on our return to the library, we drank their health in some wine that was older than themselves. The college boys and the Master and Mrs. McDonald told some delightful stories, and Stephen played and sang. Then we separated and went about as we pleased among the lanterns and the shadows: and Herbert had a scientific talk with Philip's sister that will take effect on the fourth finger of her left hand. All are gone now, 11 P. M., and Mrs. McDonald and I are having a quiet word before going to our rooms.

THE END.

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